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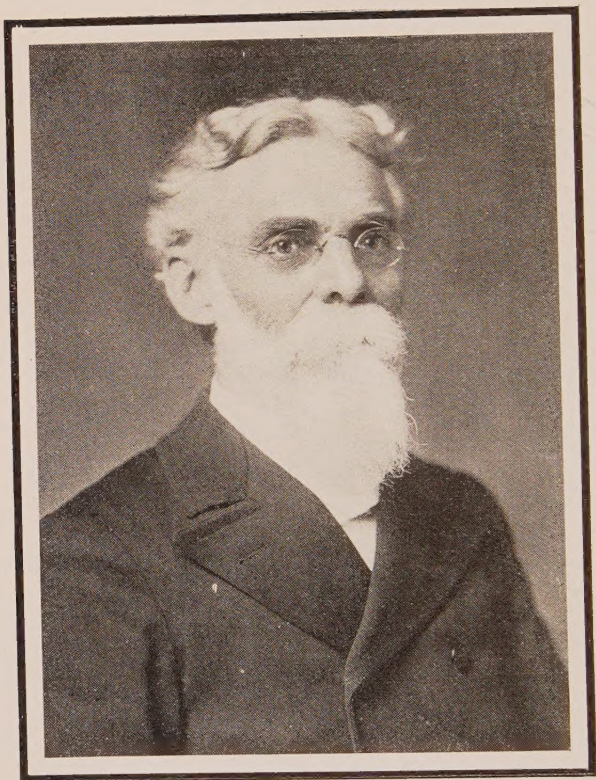
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# THE LIFE AND CAREER

OF

## JAMES WILLIAM HOTT, D.D., LL.D.

Late Bishop of the  
United Brethren in Christ

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BY

MARION R. DRURY, D.D.

With an Introduction by

LEWIS BOOKWALTER, D.D.

President Western College



Dayton, Ohio  
United Brethren Publishing House  
1902

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To that Christian Home  
To Whose Piety and Faithfulness  
James William Hott  
Owed so much for his Strong Life Equipment  
This Tribute to his Memory  
is Dedicated  
With Sincerest Affection  
By His Friend



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## PREFACE.

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THE writing of this book has been a labor of love and gratitude. It was undertaken at the request of Bishop Hott's family and near friends, and it has been carried to completion as early as was consistent with the painstaking necessary to accuracy and thoroughness. The labor involved, with the extensive correspondence required, will be appreciated by all literary workers, especially in view of the fact that the author is the busy pastor of a large parish.

The work was greatly hastened and lightened by the cordial coöperation of the bishop's brothers, J. E. and G. P. Hott, and by his son-in-law, J. G. Huber, who placed valuable materials at my disposal. A visit to the home of his aged mother in Virginia, and conversations with her, were of great value in bringing me into sympathetic touch with the whole life, early and later, which I was to sketch. The time spent amid the scenes of Mr. Hott's childhood days and early ministry was an inspiration to me, besides furnishing many important facts and incidents.

To each and all who have kindly given me aid in any way, I would herein extend my most sincere thanks.

That the reader may the better appreciate my connection and labors with this biography, some items somewhat personal may be permitted. My first personal knowledge of James W. Hott was in the autumn of 1873, soon after his removal to Dayton, Ohio, and his entrance upon his work for the Missionary Society. I

was a student in the theological Seminary, and he was a well-matured preacher and leader in church work, and then but twenty-nine years of age. During the following year, while I was a student-pastor, he preached for me at different times and gave practical encouragement to my work. My most intimate acquaintance with him, however, began at the General Conference, at Lisbon, Iowa, in May, 1881. He was then the editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and I was the pastor of the First United Brethren Church in Cedar Rapids, and the authorized reporter of the conference for a daily paper in that city. For some reason the bishop soon became much interested in the daily morning reports of the conference work. Our duties brought us much together.

As the conference was drawing to a close, the bishop one day asked me whether I would take the assistant editorship of the *Telescope* if it should be tendered me. (It was at this conference the editor was given authority to choose his assistant.) I said: "No; I cannot consider it. I am engaged in important church work at Cedar Rapids, and I cannot leave." Nothing further was said about the matter, and I returned to my work and was happy in it. About a month after the adjournment of the conference I received a telegram informing me of my appointment to the office mentioned. Being a practical printer, and having had considerable experience in writing for the press, and in harmony with the advice of trusted friends, I decided to accept the proffer made me. I therefore soon closed my pastoral labors, and within a few weeks began my work with the editor of the *Telescope*, a relation in which I spent eight happy years. At the General Conference at Fostoria, Ohio, in 1885, we were both present to report the proceedings, occupying positions facing each other at the same table. When the announcement was made that J. W. Hott was reelected



editor of the *Telescope*, he immediately whispered across the table, "You are elected, too."

These were years of congenial fellowship and pleasant colabor, in a work in which we found mutual delight, and resulting in a friendship, making this book, a memorial of love, not only a possibility, but now a joy realized.

It has been thought best by the publisher not to have too large a book, and so I have been compelled to condense and compress, and also to omit many things which might otherwise have been recorded and have had interest. But what is put into this life-story is sufficiently full to give a clear and fair portraiture of the life of this noble, useful, and beloved man.

That the distinguishing qualities of Bishop James W. Hott, faith, love, and heart-devotion to Christ and to his work, may be emulated and shared by all who peruse these pages is the supreme wish of his friend, the author,

MARION R. DRURY.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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BIOGRAPHY possesses an interest peculiarly its own. A well-written sketch of a noble life has a value and a charm second to no other species of writing. Biography is but another name for what we call history, and it has been well said that "history is the essence of innumerable biographies." Great characters are the embodiment, the personification of the best thought and life of their times. Such men become, in turn, the molders of advancing thought, and finally the inspiring subjects for brush and chisel and pen. Says Carlyle, "There is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man."

To perpetuate the memory of those who have lived illustrious lives is to render to the world a service of inestimable value. Even the preserving of their features on canvas or in marble is well worthy the effort of the master artists, the products of whose genius have adorned the galleries and gardens of the civilized world. But it is the part of the biographer, and his great privilege, not only to hand down the name and memory of the good and great, but to portray and preserve their very life itself, the essence and secret of their goodness and greatness. The hero of the biographer does not stand before us a piece of statuary, but breathes, and walks, and acts, a living man.

Bishop James William Hott, whose biography is given in this volume by his friend, Dr. M. R. Drury, was a man of rare gifts and intensely active life. His career, so suddenly closed, and, as it seems to us, at

the very height of his usefulness, was one of marked character. There was a vigor and freshness, an energy and boldness, in his life, and a steady progress and achieving, which attracted early and admiring attention and made him a recognized and inspiring leader. He is a splendid subject for a rarely interesting life-narrative, and the biographer has come fully up to his inviting task.

Bishop Hott was a man of versatility and wide range of knowledge. Although he had not the advantages of the schools of higher learning, yet he was such a tireless student and keen observer that he became, in a true sense, an educated, scholarly man. He was a vigorous writer, whether preparing an editorial, a magazine article, or a book. As a preacher and lecturer he was original, clear, and forcible, and often eloquent. He was a ready man in an unusually wide field.

Bishop Hott, with his clear ideas and strong nature, could not but be a man given to having his own opinions and expressing them. While always according to others the right to their views, he demanded the right to adhere to his own. It was his originality and his positive, though kind, advocacy of his opinions which made him the valuable man in counsel and in action that he was, and gave him the high place he held in the general esteem. In the final analysis of character, we place our highest estimate, not upon the negative, but the positive virtues. As says Holmes, "We don't care most for those flat-pattern flowers that press best in the herbarium."

Mr. Hott's biographer has necessarily given the picture, not of a sweet-spirited, gentle man only, but the picture of a character in which with the milder virtues are united those vigorous, positive traits which are always found in leaders.

Bishop Hott was progressive but not radical. He was tenacious for the valuable in the old, but was ever

ready and eager for any new helpful methods of interpreting and applying truth. In the recent past the changes made or attempted in almost all fields of thought have been so rapid and radical that many men have either fallen behind and gotten out of joint with the times, or have been swept off their feet. Bishop Hott was possessed of that mental acuteness and that intellectual grasp which combined to make him both ready and rational in handling the great questions of the hour.

His career covers a period in our Church when its life was unfolding and strength developing the most rapidly, a period of our history the most marked by progressive thought and measures. He was in the forefront of every forward movement. He was a valuable man during times when broadening views and a larger future required an intelligent, judicious, and forcible presentation before the Church. His biography, hence, is also a history of this intensely interesting period of the Church's life, and so possesses special interest and value.

If it were asked of the writer that he name that special gift or trait of Bishop Hott's which made him the strong, marked man he was, the reply would be that, in his judgment, his strength of character did not lie in the possession of any one gift in a remarkable degree, but rather in having a remarkably well-rounded general endowment; and in that these well-proportioned capacities were all developed together with unusual judgment, care, and persistence. Bishop Hott, hence, was one of the readiest and ablest all-round men one would meet. Many men were stronger in some few fields, but few men so strong in so many fields of thought and effort; and, always, in every field, there was that accompanying vigor, directness, and practicality which in such a marked way was characteristic of the man. Hence it was that he was always—a

strong statement, but true—he was always equal to the occasion. Also, in his performance of regular duties there was a delightful originality and freshness; he seemed never to drop into mere treadmill routine.

Bishop Hott had a great heart; he was whole-souled, philanthropic, full of the juice of humanity, one who rejoiced with those who rejoiced and wept with those who wept. His heart-power was a prominent, all-pervasive element of his strength. He was “fervent in spirit.” Along with the deliberate convictions of his mind went the warm impulses of his heart. With him, to believe in a cause was to throw his whole soul into it; to esteem a man was to be his friend; to believe in the Christ was to love him. What has been named “energy” in his nature would perhaps be better called “ardor,” “devotedness.”

There was, after all, one supreme element in Bishop Hott’s character, one determining force at the center of his life—his lofty devotion to Christ and the promotion of his kingdom in the earth. From his entrance upon his life-work in early youth, through all the years, in every field to which the Church called him, his devotion of himself was complete. He gave himself to his sacred work in every energy of soul and body, without stint, and often, as it would seem, beyond his strength. He stands forth as an illustrious example of the best type of self-sacrificing service. We contemplate his noble life only with admiration; we become inspired with like high ambitions. It is this heroic, tireless devotion which so signally characterized the living man that gives to this faithful, true sketch of his life its vigor and sustained interest.

The biographer, Dr. Drury, having been so long and intimately associated with Dr. Hott in the editorial work of the *Religious Telescope*, is especially qualified to give to the Church and world the true story of his life. No time or labor has been spared in gathering

material touching all periods of Mr. Hott's career, from original sources. The general plan of the book is well devised, its outline in chapters is especially skillful, and the whole is wrought out, down to well-chosen particulars, with admirable tact and taste.

Our Church literature is becoming rich in biography. The older leaders have been passing away, and volume is following volume of the record of their noble lives. There are no books we prize more highly than these.

Another leader has left us, and now, to the cherished list of biographies is added this one, the authorized and full memoir of our so recently lamented Bishop Hott. The merit of the man and the merit of the book will make this a widely-read volume.

L. BOOKWALTER.

*Toledo, Iowa, September 13, 1902.*





# THE LIFE AND CAREER OF JAMES WILLIAM HOTT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ANCESTRY, BIRTH, AND EARLY LIFE.

TO BE well born is a heritage of inestimable worth. Parentage, however, is not everything in determining character or in shaping destiny. There are other factors which must be taken into the account when the sum total of life is made up. These include that mysterious power known as environment, education, and religion; for it must be admitted that, however noble may be the blood of one's ancestry, he is not thereby guaranteed nobility in character and life. There must enter into any human excellence the elements of choice and high purpose, for without these even the best inherited family traits and favoring external influences will be unavailing.

Still, it must be accepted as true, that, primarily, the preponderating characteristics of a life, moral and intellectual, as well as physical, are inherited. Hence it is that in the study of a man's character, and in making an estimate of his strength and worth, it is necessary to know something of antecedent bloods and tendencies. This knowledge will serve as a key to the life, or as the stream leading to its distant and vital sources.

Next to this study, early home influences must be considered. In what atmosphere did the young

human plant grow? What of the influence of parental character and government? Here will be found forces which have had a lasting effect on the after life that well deserve earnest contemplation. This is all the more true when the early training produces such permanent impressions as those so clearly manifest in the character and career of James William Hott.

The history of the Hotts in America embraces a period of nearly two hundred years. Though the head of the family came from Germany, his ancestors were originally from France, whence they were driven because of their Protestant faith, finding a refuge and a home on German soil. From there they came to this country many years before the Revolutionary War, one branch of the family becoming the owners of large tracts of land in the early settlement of the Shenandoah Valley, in Virginia.

They were a patriotic and liberty-loving people. At least one member of the family, George Hott, was a soldier in the war for American independence, and his musket, a relic of historic interest, is still preserved.

The father of the subject of this biography was Jacob F. Hott. On the 17th of August, 1843, he was married to Jane Streit, a noble young woman reared in his own neighborhood. She was a year younger than himself and was of Scotch-German ancestry. This union of sturdy and unlike types, mental and otherwise, proved a most happy one. Their very dissimilarities made each the fitting complement of the other. The limitations in one were well balanced by the other's stronger qualities. Both were unselfish to a notable degree, losing sight of every personal desire and purpose in the sublime and holy end of their united lives. This must be regarded as the secret of their happy home, for their home was one of uniform and joyous content, a condition not possible where selfishness reigns in either the wife or the husband. Unsel-

fish love alone can make marriage a blessing and home a refuge of peace and delight. Such affection prompts the sweetest courtesies and inspires the most perfect and unwavering devotion.

In the light of the best human experience, and of that home now under review, the following lines have a profound meaning:

“For marriage, good friend, is a problem  
Resolved by this golden key—  
If each one will live for the other,  
Your home like a heaven will be.”

For this home, begun and maintained in mutual love and confidence, a good foundation was laid years before. Both the husband and wife were converted at an early age. Long before their marriage their lives were consecrated to unselfish living, and at once they identified themselves with the people of God, becoming members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

Jacob F. Hott was reared under Lutheran influences, being carefully instructed in the catechism of that denomination. His conversion took place at the age of fourteen, under the labors of a young minister of the United Brethren Church. This event won his heart and life for loyal service in the Church through whose agency he had thus been led to take upon himself the vows of Christian living. He always remained devotedly attached to the Church of his early choice. He and Jacob Markwood, the brilliant and eloquent bishop in later years, became members of the Church at the same time.

After their marriage, Jacob and Jane Hott settled on a farm eight miles north of Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia, which had belonged to the Hott family since 1740, the deed of that date bearing the seal of King George. This is in the far-famed Shenandoah Valley, a valley as remarkable for the noble men and

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women it has produced as for its picturesque landscapes and the fruitfulness of its gardens and fields. Indeed, in the estimates of highest values, it is more distinguished for its homoculture than for its agriculture. No greater tribute can be paid to any country than that it produces men—pure, broad-minded, stalwart men—men whose greatness is measured by their usefulness to their fellows.

It was in this beautiful historic valley, at the quiet retreat of a typical rural home, that James William Hott was born, November 15, 1844. He was the first child to make his advent into that new home, where a consecrated shrine had already been established, and where God was reverently and habitually worshiped. It was here, within sacred portals, that a new life was planted and a new career begun. It was here that this life early grew downward, its roots taking a deep hold on truth and piety, and upward, into the beauty, fragrance, and fruitage of manly character and useful endeavor.

In the early years of this child, his father, through his activity and helpful services in prayer and revival meetings, was led into the gospel ministry. His health, however, not being vigorous, his work in this capacity was chiefly as a local, or speaking more accurately, as a lay preacher. Though bearing a preacher's license from the quarterly conference for many years, he was not received into Virginia Conference till 1859. He then completed the course of ministerial study, as required by the Church, and was ordained. His labors as a minister, however, continued as before, being confined to preaching in destitute localities where openings for evangelistic work presented themselves, and in assisting presiding elders and pastors in revival and other meetings. He was, in fact, throughout a period of more than forty years, a missionary preacher.

It was on a beautiful Sunday, August 31, 1884, after





Residence of Mr. JAMES H. HARRIS.

having taught his class in Sunday school and having participated in the public services in the old Pleasant Valley Church, the meeting-house near by, where the family worshiped for many years, the Rev. Jacob F. Hott suddenly came to the end of his earth-life, at the age of nearly sixty-three years. This humble and faithful man, useful and honored and beloved, died as he lived, surrounded by his kindred, with abounding devotion to Christ and the Church. His last words were, "Oh, how light!" and the promise of old, "At evening time it shall be light," had a strange, though significant fulfillment.

The mother of James W. Hott still lives on the old Pleasant Valley farm. In the eighty-first year of her age, with faculties well preserved, the sun of her life having a golden setting outrivaling the coming on of the evening time under far-famed Italian skies. She is not only in a very worthy sense a mother in Israel, but she is still the mother of her children, with all the fondness and devotion of her early motherhood. She still calls her first-born "Jimmie," or "James William," and habitually speaks of him with reverent affection. Though tenderly cherishing the sweet memories of the years gone, she does not live in the past. Her radiant face is steadfastly set to the future, and her spirit is strong with the Christian's courage and hope.

Throughout her life her intellectual acuteness was not more marked than the constancy of her religious life. She was not only a mother to her children, but she was their teacher and ideal in nobleness of character and conduct. By both precept and example she permanently impressed herself on their affections and life. She lived for them, not simply to enjoy them, but that she might rear them to nobility and usefulness. To this end she devoted her best energies, and at the same time was never unmindful of her daily need of heavenly guidance. She was, therefore, a



woman of prayer. She oft gathered her darling babes in her arms alone and about the family hearth in tearful, believing intercession, while her husband was away preaching the word of Christ.

These were the parents of James William Hott. These were the guardian angels of the tender years of his childhood. These were the home teachers, whose household was ever subject to rules of piety and who conscientiously sought to follow the apostolic injunction to bring up their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." There was never any disagreement between them in matters of family government and discipline. How successful they were in meeting their parental obligations is impressively shown in the lives of their offspring.

It will serve to enhance the lesson of the quality of parental influence to remember that when their son was a boy there were no free schools in Virginia, and that there was then no juvenile literature worthy the name. He was a lad nearly ten years of age before the *Children's Friend*, the first child's paper of the United Brethren Church, was founded. That was before the age of children's books, too. What was, therefore, lacking then in books and schools and other now prevalent agencies for the development of noble character, made the child dependent for wise training on contact with nature and the refining and molding influence of the home life. That there were advantages in this kind of a school cannot be questioned, but there were likewise very great disadvantages, which we can hardly appreciate in these days of superior educational and religious privileges.

There were many things which had great power in shaping the life of this youth. One was the unrestricted freedom of his country home. Another was its moral atmosphere, which was as pure and stimulating as was the air of the mountains plainly visible



from his dooryard. What a place for a bright, earnest, and affectionate boy to grow up, and in which to receive his first lessons in essential virtue! It is not strange that these scenes and influences of his childhood should have made a lasting impression on his mind, and that in later years he should so often have spoken with deepest gratitude of his father and mother and his early home.

When James William Hott was a small boy the Sunday school was practically in its infancy, being comparatively a new agency for religious teaching and training. He was a Sunday-school scholar, however, from very tender years. As was the custom in rural districts in those days, the school was confined to the summer months. There were no helps then for either scholars or teachers. The one text-book was the Bible, or, more strictly speaking, the New Testament. The teaching for the most part was simple, and consisted in having the pupils read the Scriptures and commit particular portions to memory. This, however, was a very effective kind of teaching then, as it is to-day, and must ever be. To know the Word of God is itself a practical education.

This boy was only seven years old when his mother presented him with a small pocket edition of the New Testament. To-day that little book is among her choice keepsakes. Though the daily companion of a growing and studious lad for many years in field and shop and home, showing the marks of rugged usage, it is still well preserved.

He was but nine years of age when he had for his teacher in the Sunday school, one summer, William Meracle, who is still living at Rolla, Missouri. He says he remembers well when Jimmie Hott learned the Ten Commandments. He had offered a prize of a little book to the member of his class who would commit the commandments to memory. When the time

came for the memory-contest the boy Jimmie was in his place, eager and expectant. His feet did not reach the floor as he sat on the rude church seat, but were kept swinging in mid air, as his eyes sparkled and his heart throbbed with excited interest in the occasion. In due time his turn came to recite. He got down on the floor, stood erect, with his head little higher than the backs of the seats, and repeated the commandments "by heart" with perfect ease, winning the prize, which he kept and cherished throughout his life.

The extremely sensitive nature of this country lad quickly responded to the free surroundings of his childhood home. The open fields, skirted by woods of oak, pine, walnut, and other trees, with their wild flowers and the music of birds, were his playground and gymnasium. The little daily events happening about his home had entrancing interest to him—the visits of kindred and itinerant preachers, the Sunday services in the neighboring meeting-house, companionship with other children, the conversation in the family circle, all these fairly invested his simple rural life with a magical charm and power.

The whole period of his childhood was one in which simplicity and contentment were happily blended, a period which he always looked back to with a peculiar fondness. He never lost sympathetic touch with the humble conditions of his budding life.

To the moral character and practical wisdom of his home associations must be attributed, largely, the influences which silently and surely were used to make the future man. Natural scenery and rural life no doubt had their potency, but without the diligent training of godly parents, a country retreat, even free from moral taint, would have been insufficient for the best character-building. And it is worthy of note that most of the great men and women of civilized lands have passed their early years in rural surroundings, in coun-

try homes, amid scenes of transforming purity and power.

James Hott was always regarded a good boy, though he had a temper that sometimes well nigh got the mastery of him. He was good in a relative sense. Despite his faults, for he had them in youth as well as in after life, he was noble-hearted, industrious, honest, truthful, obedient, and trustworthy. He was a genuine boy, loving fun, and being fond of all kinds of boyish sports and games. He was skillful in running and jumping, and was an expert player of "corner ball," a game much indulged in in his school days. Though not possessing a large or strong body, he was nevertheless so vigorous and quick in his movements that he easily became a leader in exercises of an athletic sort.

His ready wit, keen sense of humor, and abounding good nature, not only won him friends, but made him a delightful and trusted companion.

These characteristics were notably present with him throughout his life. In his manhood years he could easily be a boy again. (A man is to be pitied who lacks this ability.) They strikingly exhibited themselves in his sympathetic appreciation of the freedom and playfulness of children and their love of nature and outdoor activities, and at times were manifest in his somewhat dramatic habits in pulpit and platform addresses.

His industry and skill in farm labor, in the use of the ax, and his aptness with tools in making pieces of household furniture, among which is a walnut rocking-chair still prized and well preserved, were prominent features of his early life. In his youth he was courageous, often to the point of recklessness. He seemed naturally to be without fear. His favorite method of "breaking" wild colts was to go to the field, drive the horses into a corner, and then leap upon the one to be broken, and, without bridle or saddle, ride

it, despite the most vigorous protests, till perfectly subdued.

Once during his young manhood the locks on the doors of his father's barn were broken and two fine horses were stolen. It was about midnight when the theft occurred. Being awakened by a faithful dog, and finding the horses gone, James quickly ran to a neighbor's, took a fine racer from the stable without leave, and started in pursuit of the thieves. Anticipating the course they would take, he took a shorter but quite precipitous route through the woods. He soon overtook them, and at his call they abandoned their booty and fled. He returned home about two o'clock in the morning with the horses, singing and whistling over his triumph, as he came up the road.

This quality of courage, that served the boy and the young man so well on many occasions, was likewise of inestimable value in the great battles of manhood's years. In this as well as in other respects there is a clear verification of the saying, "The boy is father to the man."

The house constituting his childhood home is in a good state of preservation and in use, being occupied by his mother and his sister and her family. It has two parts, a brick, built about eighty years ago, and a log part that is more than one hundred years old. The structure is oblong in shape, and has a roomy porch along the entire south side. It is a spacious two-story house with eight rooms, and has the characteristic kitchen fireplace of the olden time. It stands at the edge of a beautiful meadow, with surroundings of trees and farm buildings much as they were fifty and more years ago. Near by is an old building, now used as a shop, which was once the dwelling of Christian Crum, of historic memory, whose hospitality Bishop Newcomer and other pioneer preachers shared. Here they preached, and built the first altars of the United

Brethren Church in that section. These facts give to this homestead more than ordinary historic prominence and interest.

The Hott home was always a place where itinerant preachers were heartily welcomed. Many availed themselves of its hospitable entertainment and fellowship. The impressions of these associations were deep and abiding on the mind and heart of the children, especially of James William, who found great delight in caring for the visitors' horses, and in listening to their conversation in the family, in which oftentimes thrilling incidents and experiences were related. Among the esteemed visitors here were J. J. Glossbrenner and Jacob Markwood, afterwards bishops, John Haney, G. W. Statton, W. R. Coursey, J. Bachtel, C. B. Hammack, H. B. Winton, Geo. B. Rimel, and I. Baltzell. That these fathers of the Church in Virginia had a mighty influence on the life and work of this youth is clearly evidenced by his frequent and cordial references to them in after years.

These, and other ministers of different churches, little suspected at the time how their lives were studied and copied by the children in that home, especially how the manners, tone of voice, gesture, and movements were imitated by the boys. Of course, this was done in due reverence and with profound respect for the noble men themselves. This mingling with so many preachers, so diversified in dress, habits, and other distinguishing traits, led them to the copying of faults and crudities as well as qualities of manly excellence. At one time during a ministerial association when a number of preachers were staying in their home, it some way became known that the boys were good in mimicry, and they were persuaded to give an exhibition of their aptness in imitating certain preachers, which they did to the great amusement of their ministerial auditors. But it should be stated

here that the parents never permitted the caricature of even the faults or eccentricities of God's ministers by their children, as they did not the arguing of questions where two evils were compared or against conscientious convictions.

Under the influences which have been indicated, James W. Hott, in his boyhood, learned to love his home and the Church of his parents. In these two institutions, primarily and essentially, the foundations of his symmetrical life-structure were deeply and firmly laid. The impressions and memories of these formative years he always cherished with devout thankfulness.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY EDUCATION, CONVERSION, AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Too much must not be ascribed to the family ancestry or to the inherited qualities of him whose biography is herein given. Already reference has been made to his worthy parentage, and some allusion has been made to the characteristics which came to him by inheritance; but if his success and eminence were to be attributed to these alone, he must be set down as a genius, as having gifts of an extraordinary character, and his career, therefore, would be without practical lessons to people generally. If, then, the study of his life is to be helpful in stimulating youthful ambition and achievement and in giving manly courage and purpose and power in life's best endeavors, he must be presented, as he was indeed, as a man among men. Some men may be born great, but surely not many. The one test of human greatness given by our Lord is usefulness, as shown in ability and disposition to serve others. So, in the present instance it shall be the purpose to show that the influences and means leading to his successful life are such as others have and may utilize if they choose to do so. Chief among the forces contributing to human success is not genius, unless it be the genius of a noble soul joined with hard work. But even such a genius as that must find its main-spring and guiding power in early education.

It is training that makes a career of eminence and value possible. It is study and industry beginning in childhood. This is the divine law, and it is the human



law as well, for it has its root in the law of human necessity and possibility. It is enforced by direct divine precept, as also by numerous illustrious examples from Moses down to the present time.

So, in looking for the natural causes and influences which may be regarded as primary in the attainments and prominence of James W. Hott, we shall not find them in his excellent family inheritance, or in anything peculiar to himself. Rather, we shall find them in his early education, in the wise use he made of his opportunities for study and learning. The real training for his life work was received in the home rather than in the school. His home was the chief school of his boyhood. His first and most diligent teachers were his parents, who cared more for their children's moral and mental culture than they did that they might shine in society, acquire wealth, or attain to worldly fame. The school they kept was one of standard excellence. That it was chiefly a Bible school, with its lessons taught in informal conversations and illustrated in noble thinking and living, detracts nothing from its educational power and value. It gave a healthful stimulus to reading and inquiry. But here there were limitations. While the home library contained some valuable books, there were few of a character suited to a boy's mind. And yet it was poring over such volumes as were here found, especially at night, by the aid of the dim pine light in the old-fashioned fireplace, that enabled him to lay so well the foundations of knowledge and power of thought that so distinguished him in his mature years. His insatiable mental thirst was the key which unlocked the treasure-houses which yielded to him these rich acquisitions.

The lessons of that fireplace, with its flickering light, were never forgotten. Through all his public life, the sermons and addresses, editorial and other writings, of James W. Hott, fairly sparkled with the light kindled



at that home hearth. But he was not wholly without other school opportunities. His parents gave him the best advantages of this kind that their community afforded. These were furnished in the "subscription" schools held one "quarter," about sixty days, each winter in the neighborhood. The first school of this character that he attended was held in an apartment of the Green Spring "Stone Church," fitted up for school purposes, about a mile from his home. This church is still standing, with the wooden partition separating the schoolroom from the place of worship. It was erected about the year 1811, and is now little more than a silent landmark of past generations. Later, a frame schoolhouse was erected in another part of the community, evidencing the educational spirit of the people, where a like school was held, supported by those who appreciated and used its advantages.

The school education of this boy was limited to the opportunities afforded by schools of this primitive type. After he was old enough to be of service on the farm he did not go to school at all except in the winter season for two months, and then only till he was sixteen years of age. His teachers were of the characteristic stern type of the time, and some of them believed in the free use of the rod as an effective aid in promoting moral, mental, and physical discipline. However, there was one lad who never received his instruction in that way. One of his most capable and highly-esteemed teachers, Thomas W. Robinson, who is still living, bears this enthusiastic testimony to him:

"He never came to class without well-studied lessons, reciting in no perfunctory manner, but with enthusiasm and earnestness, and when recess came he was among the first to engage in playing 'corner ball,' a game much indulged in at that time and greatly enjoyed by him.

"He was full of life, vigorous, hopeful, energetic,

capable, with great determination, brooking no ordinary obstacles. I thought, with health and strength, there was a future for him, and when the eminence was attained I was not surprised. He possessed that sometimes rare commodity called common sense, in an eminent degree, with much sympathy and geniality, making himself greatly loved by all his schoolmates.

"Though the years have been many and our pathways widely separated, there are no brighter spots that come up with such distinctness, with such rare pleasure, with such a halo of gladness around them, as when memory travels back to over forty years ago and calls up the old 'Mountain' schoolhouse and school, and Jimmie Hott, as we called him, as student, as friend, and at all times an earnest, conscientious seeker after truth and knowledge."

Mr. Robinson also says that this student of his was a good speller and debater, and that he rarely missed a meeting of the debating and spelling societies. The debating society was the lyceum of the time, in which all sorts of knotty questions were discussed. In these he learned to utilize his knowledge and to think before an audience. One familiar with those days, and the actors in the scenes referred to, says: "From his youth, Jimmie was a master in this field. Not that he could argue a question so well, but he took the judges and the audience by storm, swaying them by sheer force of feeling, and leading them captive at his will, a certain indescribable quality of tone in his voice contributing in no small degree to the accomplishment of his end. With an eloquent appeal to the feelings of the judges he would smash the strongest arguments of his opponents and leave them wondering how it came about. He cared little for the argument, but much for the decision of the judges. And this he seldom failed to get. He was equally skillful in the use of the comic and pathetic, gesture and tone, tears and terror."

It was in these schools and in the debating societies that good beginnings were made by the young student and debater, in acquiring studious habits and a genuine love for learning. Though the text-books of the time were not ideal, and the curriculum of studies was limited, the schools did effective work. Then, as now, it was not so much what the student got out of the books, but what he got out of himself.

Though this eager learner made such commendable progress in reading and public speaking, he was always a poor writer. All who are at all acquainted with his penmanship know that. Whether that was the fault of his teachers or due to a lack of painstaking, we are not told, but this we know, that in this field where proficiency is so desirable, he never got beyond the "pot hooks" and "hangers." Once after he became bishop he saw an editorial in the *Telescope* asking correspondents to be more careful with their writing, and, suspecting it might have reference to himself, he wrote: "Say, can't your 'boys' make out my fine copy? or was that editorial meant for some other fellow? Now, really, I never have any trouble reading my 'copy.' You used to be proficient and sufficient. Have your guessing powers declined with the weight of years? I hope not. Really, I can't take that editorial. Oh, Dr. Kephart wrote it! Now I see! Well, well! How about his 'pot hooks'?"

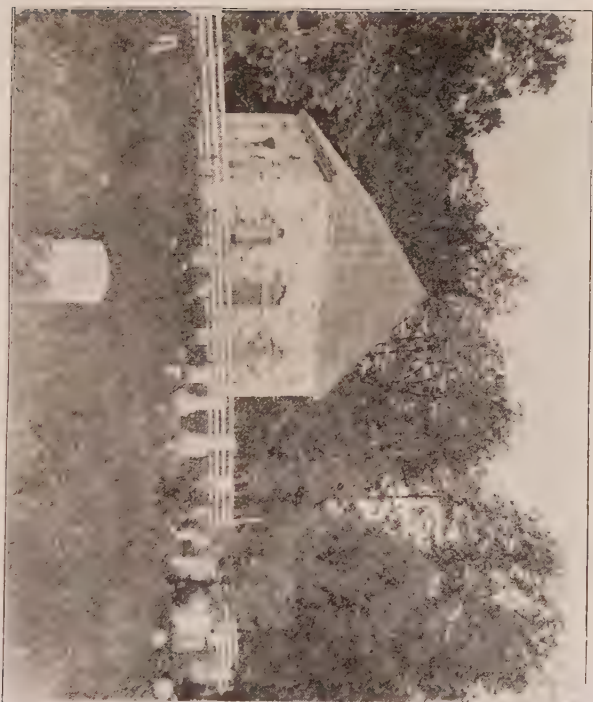
Strictly speaking, the education of this youth, which in after years became so varied and extensive, was in the university of life, in which he diligently studied men and current events as well as books, till in the best sense he became a widely-informed and thoroughly cultured man. He is a notable example of what a young man can make out of himself, where favorable circumstances and a college training are wanting. He well deserves the distinction, if such a distinction is ever deserved, of being self-made.

In his education we are reminded of the purpose of John Eliot, the apostle to the American Indians, who gives an indication of how he acquired his education in the following closing words in his famous Indian grammar: "We must not sit still and look for miracles. Up and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything." Mr. Hott, through the greater part of half a century, was a constant illustration of the truth of these emphatic words.

To have acquired so complete an education, largely through his own endeavors, and in the midst of the exacting demands of official duties in many relations, is one of the marvelous feats of his career. In it is found surpassing encouragement for the poor boy, who, with honest and industrious purpose, desires to make the most possible out of his life.

We now come to a new and distinct epoch in the life of James W. Hott. It is marked by an event which was no insignificant factor in his preparation for his wide usefulness. This event was his conversion, at the age of thirteen, in the old Stone Church previously referred to. The immediate agent in leading him publicly to confess Christ as his Saviour was a pious Methodist class-leader by the name of Andrew Hyatt. It was during a time of deep religious awakening in the community. Many were turning to the Lord. Even at this time the young were not overlooked. One evening Mr. Hyatt, who was especially active in the good work going on, went to Mrs. Hott and anxiously inquired, "Where is Jimmie?" "He is here," answered the mother, also deeply solicitous for the spiritual welfare of her son; whereupon the zealous soul-winner sought him out and led him to the altar, where he was happily converted.

In after years, when relating his Christian experience, Mr. Hott always referred with affectionate ten-



STONE CHURCH IN WHICH BISHOP HOTT WAS CONVERTED.



derness to this humble man as being the human instrument in his salvation. It is a striking instance of the power and far-reaching influence of personal effort in winning souls.

The preachers in this revival meeting were Isaiah Baltzell and Samuel B. Evers. Mr. Baltzell, then a young man in the ministry, afterwards became widely known in the Church as a writer of music. His songs as well as his preaching have had a rich fruitage. Who can estimate the possibilities of a single soul thus won to Christ and his service?

It was in the same church where his conversion occurred that this young disciple also attended Sunday school. One of his early teachers relates that, at an experience meeting, about a year after his new life began, he deliberately arose and walked to the altar, and, with deep emotion he pointed to the place of his surrender to Christ, saying, "Right there God for Christ's sake spoke peace to my soul." The courage and clearness with which this testimony was given struck a responsive chord, and there was a spontaneous "shout in the camp."

In that very suggestive and helpful book, "Sacred Hours with Young Christians," written in the years of ripe Christian experience, Mr. Hott says that, in the supreme moment of his conversion, he was so lost in a sense of his sinfulness, and so drawn out in love to Christ, whom by faith he saw on the cross, that for some time he was utterly unconscious of all earthly things. Then overflowing joy filled his soul. For hours before, deepest darkness had enshrouded his heart. It became so dense that all earthly objects were lost to view. The last things remembered before the light of a new life dawned upon him were the prayers of loved ones to Jesus to take into his forgiving love a struggling soul. Then followed a season alone with Christ, who filled the soul with light and peace. The



next consciousness of things about was the presence of a loved mother and father and others in rejoicing, singing,

“Happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away.”

But this new experience meant more than the entrance on a new life. Though the convert was so young, he saw life as it had not appeared to him before. With this changed vision came a new and definite aim—an aim that gave his life ever after notable unity and strength.

What was that aim? It was to live like his new Master—to live a life of ministry to needy fellow-men. There could be no higher aim than that, for service is the highest conception and privilege of the Christian life. In accepting Christ’s mastery he gained a notable self-mastery.

This new vision in life began early to manifest itself in reading and study, and in taking up active Christian duties. His initiation into these duties was about the home altar. When his father was away preaching, the mother conducted the family worship. Here the lad Jimmie took his first lessons in the life of godly living, often leading in prayer and in the reading of the Scriptures. Here, too, he heard his parents pray for the spread of Christ’s kingdom, and that the Lord would “send forth laborers into his harvest.”

How these prayers were answered may easily be seen when it is known that the eight children growing up in that home (one died in infancy) early became Christians, and five of the six sons were called into the gospel ministry. Referring to this fact, and the influence of his home, Mr. Hott wrote in 1884, soon after the death of his father: “There were no deflections from the parental example. Each in turn, eight in all, six brothers and two sisters, gave heart and life

to Christ, and walking in the example of godly parents, grew to manhood and womanhood. The father, Jesse-like, stood and saw his children pass in order, and behold God chose the eldest son, then the second, then the third, a daughter, placing her beside a minister of Jesus Christ, then the fourth, then the fifth, counting them worthy to be put into the Master's path of toil for souls. The father stood tearfully by as the Master allowed only two to remain in the home, and marked the eighth and last for his crowning jewel, and who also turned his heart and head to the great mission of saving men. This last son only passed a few terms at school when he came home and died. Death took him to show what he could do in a happy home."

It is not strange that these noble sons should be called to the work of the Christian ministry; for it is in the order of God's plan that his ministers should come from homes whose atmosphere is charged with the pure ozone of an earnest spiritual life. It is amid such holy influences that the deepest and most abiding religious impressions are made and the most loyal and heroic characters are formed and drilled for their life work.

In October, 1895, Bishop Hott wrote for the *Watchword* an account of his first sermon, some extracts from which will serve to throw additional light on his call to the ministry. He says: "As I now recall that first effort to preach, there come strange, sweet, sad memories which I dare not report. It was a cold, stormy night in the late winter or early spring of 1861, probably in March, at Mt. Pleasant Church, Winchester Circuit, Virginia Conference, a neat frame church. The pastors were J. D. Freed and C. T. Stearn, who were present to begin a protracted meeting. . . . I was only a boy, three or four months past sixteen years of age, and had no license to preach or even to exhort, though I had undertaken to deliver

an exhortation some weeks before in a Methodist church in the same county."

He had felt his call "to preach from the time of his conversion at thirteen. The first suggestion that he should be licensed, however, came from the presiding elder, H. B. Winton, following a quarterly conference in the home church, when this official said to the father, pointing to his son, "We ought to have given license to this boy to-day," to which the father simply replied, "Oh, no, not yet for a while."

The next intimation that he was to become a preacher was when asked to preach his first sermon, to which reference has been made. Of his preparation for his work, Mr. Hott says: "The preparation for such a duty was peculiar for what it had, and also for what it had not in it. I had been accustomed to speak in class-meetings as called on by the leader, and in experience meetings, for three years. My father was a local preacher, and for his day had an excellent library. It had, as I remember, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, Clark's Commentaries, Dick's Works, and all the books in the preachers' course of study, Watson's Bible Dictionary, a number of the standard poets, and numerous devotional books. Of course, the sermon and sketch books were there, though father never used them in the preparation of sermons. . . . Such books as have been referred to I had read almost constantly at odd hours, by day and by a pine light at night. Our home was a kind of Bible school, or theological seminary from the first, in which both father and mother were daily teachers. There was no formal school or lessons, to be sure, but the themes and doctrines of these books were discussed, as was also the sermonic statement of truth."

Of the manner in which this school was conducted a brother next younger than James says: "Evenings at home must be counted for much. Father was a





PLEASANT VALLEY CHURCH, THE HOME CHURCH OF BISHOP HOTT

student of close and constant application. The lamp was in the center of the table, and the children gathered around it with mother near by, and, notwithstanding her sewing or knitting, she always took sufficient interest in what was passing to interpose wise counsel or just observation upon all the subjects of the hour. The subjects considered from time to time took a very wide range—theological, philosophical, scientific, literary, historical, social, ethical, practical, in short everything that seemed important for children to know in order to prepare them for the duties and responsibilities of life. But the best and most important of all that was studied there was Jesus Christ and his atonement. National and popular evils were examined from a biblical standpoint till their true character and influence were deeply fixed on the young minds."

It was in this home school that the call repeatedly came to this young man, now sixteen, to be a preacher of the everlasting gospel, and in it a large measure of his educational preparation was received. But his teaching was not alone human.

The text of his first sermon was John 14:6, "I am the way." He preached without notes, but not with entire satisfaction to himself. One who heard his first effort says the young preacher afterwards told him that he thought of a good deal more to say after he sat down than he did while on his feet—an experience not uncommon with beginners in public speaking.

The disappointment over this maiden effort at preaching was not without its compensating benefits. In the weeks that followed, he preached at Smoketown and Pleasant Valley. At the latter place, that being his home church, his neighbors and kindred came to hear him. He preached from John 3:16. These efforts not only served to give added emphasis to the inward conviction of his call to preach, but that to preach effectively his messages must be born from above. "A

#### 44 *Life and Career of James William Hott*

fourth effort," he says, "brought the crisis of my life. God must help me and enable me to preach from the heart, or the thought of the ministry must be forever abandoned. I could do no better than to throw myself into such an issue. The conflict was overwhelming. Discouragements were crushing. I knew not what to do but to stake all on the issue. I was all alone. I had no one to counsel. Broken-hearted, I fell into the hands of Christ. He had mercy on me for his dear name's sake."

It is here, at this early period in his life, that we learn the one great secret of his singular pulpit power in the years that followed. The one distinguishing quality of his ministry was his heart power. His preaching was nothing but "the bursting out of light which was first burst in or up from where God is," and out of conscious fellowship with him in prayer.

## CHAPTER III.

### EARLY MINISTRY, MARRIAGE, AND HOME.

JAMES W. HOTT was given his first formal authority to preach the gospel April 8, 1861, his license bearing the signature of Jacob Markwood, presiding elder. The following February, at Edenburg, Shenandoah County, Virginia, he was received into Virginia Conference, and given annual conference license, signed by Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner. Five other applicants to preach were received into the conference at the same time. These were, J. K. Nelson, C. T. Stearn, A. M. Evers, J. M. Canter, and H. A. Bovey. This was a class of noble young men, three of whom are yet living and engaged in the active ministry.

These new recruits in the ministerial ranks began their life work at a very trying time in the history of the Church and of the nation, just at the opening of the Civil War.

Beginning with 1862, Virginia Conference met in two sections for four years, the northern part in Maryland, within the territory occupied by the Union army, and the southern portion within the Confederate lines. Bishop Markwood presided over the northern branch and Bishop Glossbrenner over the southern.

The minutes of the Edenburg conference, which convened February 14, 1862, as the secretary says, constitute the "minutes of that portion of Virginia Conference which met four years as a portion only, owing to the obstruction formed by the Civil War." At this conference Mr. Hott received his appointment as an itinerant minister, being made junior preacher with

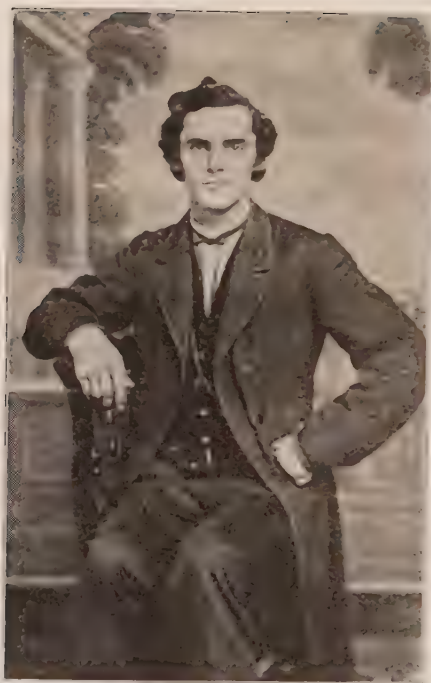


J. K. Nelson, on Winchester Circuit. This was the charge on which he had been born and reared, and at this time it embraced three counties and had twenty preaching places. From the records it seems that his appointments for the three years following were made by the northern section of the conference, and for two years more Nelson and Hott continued as the Winchester preachers. Their labors together during these three years were very arduous, and were a severe tax on both spiritual and nervous energy. Their duties called them within the lines of both armies, and they carried passes from each; but the war and the bitter feelings it occasioned caused many hardships and hindrances which were not only perplexing, but involved great hazard of life.

Despite the obstacles encountered, however, these were years of great religious interest among the people, and it was the joy of the young pastor and his colleague to see numerous revivals in which some six hundred were converted and added to the Church.

When we remember that this junior preacher began his ministry when only a little past sixteen years of age, and that among his friends and kindred, where usually the prophet is without honor, we can easily imagine what must have been his natural gifts, and the esteem in which he was held. Then when we think of the troublous times when he entered this work, we can likewise easily imagine the severe tests to which he must have been frequently put. The anxiety felt for him while on his long preaching tours was very great, especially by his devoted mother, through all this period of cruel civil strife. Yet, though exposed to very great dangers, he carried a revolver only during a single trip. He found it a burden and a source of temptation to him, so he discarded its use entirely, preferring to entrust himself and his interests to the keeping of Him whose servant he was.





JAMES W. HOTT AT THE AGE OF TWENTY.

He was the boy preacher of the conference, and still had his home with his parents, and was but twenty-one when the war closed. His faithfulness and success during these four years which tried *men's* souls won for him not only unstinted praise from his friends, but even the respect and admiration of his enemies.

It was at a meeting of the northern portion of the conference, early in 1864, that Mr. Hott received ordination at the hands of his dear friend, Bishop Glossbrenner, assisted by Bishop Markwood. The way the bishop came to be at the conference is thus explained by Dr. A. W. Drury, in his "Life of Glossbrenner":

"At the close of 1863 Bishop Glossbrenner applied to the Confederate authorities for a pass with a view to attending Pennsylvania Conference, and also the northern half of Virginia Conference. The pass was obtained from President Davis. . . . He took with him his youngest daughter, Josie, then eighteen years of age, and journeyed northward. . . . The first Union picket he met was a young Mr. Bonewell, son of the Rev. J. W. Bonewell, of the United Brethren Church. This young man recognized him, having seen him at his father's home in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. He was obliged to detain him until he obtained permission to admit him. . . . The regulations were so strict with reference to crossing the Potomac in the neighborhood of Martinsburg that the desired permission could not be obtained.

"Bishop Glossbrenner then returned to near Winchester, to the home of the Rev. Jacob F. Hott. At this time, his son, the Rev. J. W. Hott, returned from his circuit. Bishop Glossbrenner had not seen him for a considerable time, as after he had joined the conference in 1862, his field had been, for the most part, north of the Confederate lines. When the Bishop met him he kissed him. The Rev. J. W. Hott told him that he was satisfied he could pass through Morgan County

and cross the Potomac at another point, where the authorities were not so strict. He loaned him some money and accompanied him. The bishop preached several times on week-nights on the way."

Permission to pass was secured, and, crossing the river, the bishop went to Hagerstown, Maryland, where he tarried a short time and then went on to Chambersburg. Returning, he stopped at Boonsboro, Maryland, where the northern part of Virginia Conference was held. The meeting of the bishop and the young preacher at this conference was an ever memorable event in both their lives, and it served to cement more closely the bonds of their friendship, which were never broken in later years.

At one of the conferences Mr. Hott attended in Maryland during the war, he wore a suit of gray clothes, made by his mother from goods which she had woven. The brethren there not being pleased to see one of their number in "rebel" attire, raised money and purchased a becoming black suit, which they presented to him.

He came near losing a good suit of clothes once; it may have been this very one. He was returning from one of his preaching tours, and when within a mile of home he discovered a neighbor's house on fire. He joined in the effort to quench the flames, and in so doing, his clothes, to say the least, were greatly damaged. It was so in many things, that in his thoughtfulness and zeal for the welfare of others he seemed to be wholly unmindful of his own interests.

May 31, 1864, when not yet twenty years of age, Mr. Hott was married to Martha A. Ramey, two years his senior, the eldest daughter of Presley and Elizabeth Hammack Ramey, born and reared near the historic town of Winchester. She belonged to one of the best known families in the valley of Virginia, their names being synonyms for nobleness of character, piety, and





MR. AND MRS. HOTT SOON AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE.



integrity. She was converted in her girlhood, and joined the United Brethren Church, in whose fellowship she continued to live all her life. She was unselfishly devoted to her husband and to the Church, and cheerfully gave herself to the toils and sacrifices of an itinerant minister's wife.

After spending another year on his home charge after his marriage, Mr. Hott was assigned to a new field, Martinsburg, where he remained but one year. Here his labors were prospered and extensive revivals resulted.

It was during his last year at Winchester that A. M. Evers, who was the pastor at Crosskeys, Rockingham County, had his noble riding-horse stolen. The horse was taken to Martinsburg and sold. However, later the animal was recovered, as Mr. Evers says, "largely through the kindness and untiring efforts of Brother Hott." This was another characteristic piece of practical friendliness to a brother in need, and what did a United Brethren preacher need in those days more than a good horse?

The year at Martinsburg brought the boy preacher to the 1866 session of Virginia Conference, the first after the war. This was indeed a memorable meeting. Brethren in the ministry separated for years met again and rejoiced in tearful gratitude in the good providence that had been over them in the years of their enforced separation.

In 1884, after a visit to Virginia, when these memories were revived, Mr. Hott, in writing for the *Religious Telescope*, says: "The first full conference of ministers ever witnessed by the writer made an impression on his heart never to be effaced. It was the meeting of the Virginia Conference at Rohrer'sville, Washington County, Maryland, February 8, 1866. In 1862 six persons became members of that conference, joining the band of brethren laboring south of the

military lines, meeting at Edenburg, Shenandoah County, Virginia. All these are living and continue in the ministry, though only three remain members of the old conference. The writer is among the last named. Subsequently I met with the brethren who labored north of the war lines, in three sessions.

"When we met at Rohrsersville the cloud of war had passed. The sound of arms and the roar of the cannon and the tramp of the war horse in Virginia and Maryland were all silent. Fathers and brothers, husbands and sons, had come home from the army to rest on the bosom and arms of loved ones. But alas! not all! not all!"

The unusual character of this conference is indicated by a few lines in the secretary's record: "The morning experience meeting was most refreshing, and one long to be remembered. The sermon by Bishop Glossbrenner was, as usual with our beloved bishop, instructive, and tending to encourage believers to sweetly anticipate the home on high by the earnest within the heart."

The Lord's Supper was observed after this sermon. Of this Mr. Hott further says: "I can see Bishop Glossbrenner yet as he stood leaning on the pulpit, while great tears ran thick and fast down his cheeks as he saw the brethren of his own afflicted conference once again gathered in love about the communion board. No one who was present will ever forget the grace and love and salvation which flowed."

This was not only a memorable meeting, but it has special historical significance. Brethren had not only been separated through four testing years, but the times had been restless and exciting. The preachers in Virginia had remained at their places from several considerations. They loved the people, and believed they should not forsake them in their struggles and affliction, and so they continued faithfully to bear to

them the consolations of the gospel. They believed the war would soon close, and that they owed it to God, and their people, and to their native State, to toil in clouds and sorrow till the storms were over. This they did, remaining true to the Union cause.

Writing further of the bitter experiences of these perilous times, Mr. Hott gives this important testimony: "These four years were long, dark, and painful years. All our ministers had gone, day and night, at the peril of their lives. No men ever risked so much for the privilege of preaching the gospel of Christ and being United Brethren preachers. One was shot at while riding inoffensively on the highway. . . . A number of others had been arrested and carried before the authorities for trial. Three, at least, had been shamefully kept in prison for weeks because they would not and did not take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. . . . The writer had the honor of being three times arrested, though each time he was soon released.

"In the Maryland portion of the conference the state of things had been different. A few times when invasions by the southern army had been made, a season of fright and alarm and loss had been experienced. The battles of Antietam and South Mountain had bathed the territory in blood. But these seasons were few in number. Some of the brethren in the conference had allowed their sympathies, in a measure, to be withdrawn from the Virginia brethren. They could not understand why the preachers remained in Virginia if they were not rebels. (Ministers of the gospel in the Southern Confederacy were exempt from military service, a fact which showed the high religious sentiment and character of the Southern people.)"

This conference rejoiced not only over the Union saved, but brethren united in the tenderest bonds of brotherly love and fellowship.

Mr. Hott's next pastorate was at Edenburg, or as he calls it in the record he has left of his work, Woodstock Circuit. To this he was appointed at the Rohrersville conference. Here he remained two years.

In 1868 he was assigned to Churchville, Augusta County, Virginia, the home of Bishop Glossbrenner and other old and influential United Brethren families. Here he worked three years, his labors being highly successful and his relations most congenial. It was during the second year of his ministry at Churchville that an extensive revival occurred, and among the converts was C. H. Crowell, who has been for many years a leading member of Virginia Conference.

It was while serving this charge that Mr. Hott was elected a delegate to the General Conference which convened in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in May, 1869. He was then but twenty-four and a half years old, and bore the distinction of being the youngest member of that body. His colleagues were J. W. Howe and G. W. Statton. He was an exceedingly modest member, speaking but few times during the session.

This Conference, composed of representative men from the entire Church, made a profound impression on this junior member. It was a revelation to him. In it he saw and heard and admired many of the strong men of the denomination. He listened with intense interest to the two and a half days' discussion of the secret-society question, then a mooted question, by the ablest debaters on the floor. He cast his vote for the rigid law against secret societies, with which, in harmony with his life-long training, he was then in hearty sympathy. In later years he greatly modified his views in regard to these organizations, especially as to the methods of dealing with those connected with them.

At this Conference he earnestly supported the measure adopted looking to the founding of a theological

seminary for the Church. He returned to his home and work with a better conception of the Church's mission, and with an enlarged appreciation of its power and possibilities as an agency for the world's evangelization. Henceforth he was destined to live in a larger world, with broader sympathies, and with a more intelligent understanding of the varied activities and needs of the denomination to whose interests he was so warmly devoted.

After his three years of fruitful ministry at Churchville, Mr. Hott was next stationed at Boonsboro, Maryland. This was in 1871. The circuit embraced several churches, strong in numbers and wealth, and was a better charge than he had previously served. This was a well-deserved testimony to his growing power and popularity as a preacher and pastor.

In the autumn of his second year at this place, he was again chosen to represent his conference in the General Conference, which was to meet in Dayton, Ohio, the headquarters of United Brethren Church interests, in May, 1873. At the session of his conference, held early in that year, he was transferred to Hagerstown, one of the oldest and most important churches in the conference. This appointment, too, was clearly in the line of promotion. But his pastorate here was short, for at the General Conference he was called into the general work of the Church. With this Conference the period of his early ministry closes. He had been a pastor for eleven years and a few months. These had been years of earnest, and much of the time heroic toil in the Master's service. They had been years of growing power and usefulness. The boy preacher had been a diligent student, continuously adding to his mental furnishing through the passing years.

Though beginning to preach when so young, and without special school preparation, he made such faithful and wise use of his opportunities for improvement

that he early came to be an able and popular preacher and an excellent expositor of the Word of God. His preaching was always a delight to himself, because it was a service of the heart. From the first, he preached the great essential doctrines of the gospel, and those who knew him best in the years he was a circuit-rider, with large and difficult parishes, in times of war and through the trying period of reaction following, bear uniform testimony to his strenuous life, to his faithfulness and self-sacrifice, to his tact and helpfulness as a pastor, and to his success as a soul-winner. But as his distinctive qualities as a preacher will have special consideration in later chapters, further reference to them, for the present, will be deferred.

It will be of interest, however, before passing from this period to notice a few things which properly fall within it. We have now followed the boy preacher from place to place, we have seen his development in manly character and influence, and the gradually increasing recognition accorded his worth throughout this probationary period of his ministry. A very simple and suggestive illustration of his progress as a preacher and church leader is found in the compensation he received for his services. While it does not wholly indicate the growing acceptability of his ministry, yet in the main it does. The following table is from a book containing an extensive record of his work from the time he began preaching:

## SALARIES.

1862, Winchester Circuit.....	\$107 25
1863, Winchester Circuit.....	130 00
1864, Winchester Circuit.....	140 00
1865, Martinsburg Circuit.....	350 00
1866, Woodstock Circuit.....	190 00
1867, Woodstock Circuit.....	300 00
1868, Churchville Circuit.....	320 00



1869, Churchville Circuit.....	330 58
1870, Churchville Circuit.....	350 00
1871, Boonsboro Circuit.....	500 00
1872, Boonsboro Circuit.....	600 00

During these years the record also shows that the pastor on these several charges was the recipient of generous tokens of esteem and good-will in special gifts, sometimes aggregating handsome sums. These were indicative that as pastor he enjoyed the confidence and affection and cordial support of his people.

The statistical records of the conference, while not complete for all these years, are sufficiently full to show that Mr. Hott's ministry was abundantly fruitful in the results of evangelistic labor, in numerous conversions and accessions to the Church.

Then these years of laborious toil and fruit-bearing were years of joyous and beautiful home life. Husband and wife were ardently devoted to each other, and each lived to perfect the happiness of the other. That unselfish love dominated them which makes marriage and home and children a peculiar blessing. Wherever they lived, and however humble their cottage, their home was a haven of sweet rest, for love and contentment were resident with them. Into this home there came during these happy years of itinerant life, four beautiful children. The divine promise to those who fear the Lord was signally verified, "Thy children shall be like olive plants round thy table."

While residing at Edenburg, their first child, Etta, was born, now Mrs. D. E. Lorenz, residing in New York City. Churchville was the birthplace of their second daughter, Louella, now Mrs. J. H. Francis, of Los Angeles, California. During their residence at Boonsboro a third little girl came to adorn their home, Jennie, who two years later died in Dayton, Ohio, bringing to them their first great family sorrow. Mat-



tie, the youngest, the wife of the Rev. J. G. Huber, of Dayton, Ohio, was born at Hagerstown during the brief pastorate of her father in that city.

Never were parents and children happier in their relations than were these. Mutual love, which is the only bond of true domestic happiness, was the crowning and controlling virtue there. Such a home is not only earth's chief school of virtue, but it is a fitting type of heaven. What a benediction and model it is in any community! Happy is the church whose pastor has such a home! What a beautiful crowning a home like this is to these years spent in the blessed ministry of the glorious gospel of the Christ!

## CHAPTER IV.

### CALLED TO A NEW WORK.

As has been previously stated, Mr. Hott was elected a second time to a seat in the General Conference of his denomination, in the fall of 1872. At this time he was twenty-eight years of age, and had been nearly eleven years in the ministry. His colleagues were the same as the four years before—J. W. Howe and G. W. Statton, already veteran preachers in Virginia Conference. His election at the head of his delegation was not only a compliment to himself, but it was a clear proof that he represented a constituency that knew how to appreciate the grit, grace, and ability that go into making a successful pastor and wise churchman in difficult fields. That he possessed these qualities in ample measure was clearly proved in his work as pastor and evangelist on five different charges. It is, however, his retirement from this special work that furnishes the occasion for a *résumé* of the results of his labors to this time, which brings into sharper relief the multitude of good achievements which he has crowded into the years of his ministry.

His record in preaching and as a soul-winner, often under very trying conditions, and in laying permanent foundations for the Church where he labored, is one which does credit and honor to himself and to the cause of Christ. It is a pleasure to refer to a record such as this, which would serve as an example and inspiration to every young minister who has yet to shape his character and career in the highest of all earthly callings.

The General Conference met in Dayton, Ohio, May 15, 1873. Mr. Hott was there at almost the precise period of middle life. He was but twenty-eight and a half years of age, yet a young man. His experience in the Conference of four years before enabled him to come to this session with the ready capacity for intelligent participation in the proceedings, which only familiarity with the work to be done can give. He possessed a maturity and power rarely found in one of his years. His hair and beard were jet black, giving him an appearance remarkable in contrast with the last years of his life. His eye was clear and keen, and the freshness of youth was yet in his face. His step was quick and elastic, and his spirit had the buoyancy of the morning. His whole being was literally surcharged with that nervous energy that is so characteristic of the world's greatest leaders. He was faultlessly attired in a suit of conventional black, of strictly clerical pattern. In dress, manners, and speech he was a typical Virginian of that day. His bearing was manly, courteous, and dignified, and there was a freedom and tact about his participation in the Conference business which not only attracted attention, but which commanded the admiration and respect of his fellow-delegates. He was a ready, though not a frequent speaker on questions before the Conference. Some of his speeches were notably bright and eloquent, and won for him a recognition and a prominence which come in deliberative assemblies only to men of good sense and practical ideas. He gave his earnest support to the proposition favoring lay-delegation in the councils of the Church, and other measures of a progressive character.

At this time the lines were sharply drawn on the secret-society question. The two parties were known as the "radicals" and the "liberals." On any matter having any relation to this vexatious question Mr.





MR. HOTT WHEN MISSIONARY TREASURER.

Hott always voted with the radicals, in strict accord with his own convictions and the traditions of the Church. However, in his spirit and in his relations with men, his position would have been that of a moderate conservative rather than a partisan radical. It is well to note this fact at this time, as it will have an important bearing upon his future official relations and influence.

It was on the tenth day of the Conference, after the principal business was finished, that the election of the general Church officers—bishops, editors, secretaries, etc.—took place. The choice for treasurer of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society fell upon J. W. Hott, a result wholly unexpected to himself and friends, and yet easily accounted for in his character and varied abilities. From what had been seen of him in the Conference and what was known of his careful business habits, it was believed he would be a safe man with whom to entrust the financial management of the Church's missionary society. It might have seemed to some too great an honor and responsibility conferred on one so young, but in the light of subsequent events it is clear that no mistake was made in his selection.

At the close of the General Conference Mr. Hott returned to his home and arranged to move his family to Dayton, and for his early entrance upon the new work to which he had been called. On the 2d day of July, 1873, obedient to the voice of the Church, and following what seemed to him the indication of Providence, he parted with his highly-esteemed congregation at Hagerstown. Writing soon after of the sundering of the happy relations there, he says: "The force of this separation was keenly realized. To be withdrawn from a congregation for whose spiritual good one has toiled, and to be removed from those who have need to be early led to Jesus, presses a minister's heart with pain. This separation was the more undesirable because it severed me

for four years from the connection I had held with the hard-working ministers of Virginia Conference for nearly twelve years, some of them years of battle and of blood."

After a few days, Mr. Hott and family arrived in Dayton where they were to make their future home, not only for four years, but for more than five times that number. They were given a cordial reception, but ere they had had time to become settled in their own home they were stricken with a sudden and unexpected sorrow in the death of Jennie May, the next to the youngest member of the household, then just two years old. This affliction was especially severe because the bereaved family was in a strange city, far removed from the kindred and friends of other years. But the kindness and sympathy of new friends brought comfort and support, and the aching head and heart found repose in the love and grace of the divine Comforter. Afterwards, writing of the lesson of this sorrowful visitation, Mr. Hott said: "Altogether, we have a better view of human sympathy, a clearer comprehension of the influence and power of brotherly-kindness, and, I trust, a stronger confidence in the religion of the Lord Jesus. The tasks of life are heavy, but the heart leans with faith on God, and the hands must toil on, while we look for the bright morning to come with its day of endless glory."

During the quadrennium following his entrance into the general services of the Church, Mr. Hott was not only the treasurer of the Missionary Society, but he was also the treasurer and soliciting agent of the Church-Erection Society, then in its infancy. Though the first steps toward the organization of this society were taken at the General Conference in 1869, little was done to promote it till 1872, when the first work of soliciting funds for it was begun. This society, so closely related in its purposes and interests to the Mis-



sionary Society, was entirely under the control of that society till 1889, and was managed by its officers.

Thus the causes of missions and church extension became the all-controlling objects of the endeavors of their new representative for the next four years. To their promotion he brought the energy and enthusiasm and consecration of his body, mind, and heart. These were years of extensive travel, visiting conferences and holding special meetings in the interest of these enterprises, now rapidly growing in public favor. In this way he became widely acquainted with the Church, its ministers and people, its needs and possibilities, and with marvelous zeal and adaptation he devoted himself to the duties of his office. The energy and tact, and faith and success, which characterized his work in this new field, in private solicitation, and in the convincing appeals at conferences and elsewhere, and through the Church press, won for him the sympathy and commendation of the Church.

The year 1874 was observed throughout the United Brethren Church as the centenary of its founding. This was made the occasion of special efforts to raise centennial funds for missions, church erection, and Union Biblical Seminary, the latter being the new theological school of the Church. While Mr. Hott was not connected with this institution, he was among its warmest supporters, and devoted himself with great earnestness to the holding of centenary meetings where its interests were presented, and in collecting funds for the causes directly committed to him. In this work he met with gratifying success, his efforts being signally blessed in the promotion of the forward movements of the denomination during that year. While the centenary purpose was conducive to the strengthening and enlargement of the general enterprises and institutions of the Church, it also turned to the advantage of local interests, in church-building, etc., in

a large degree. Mr. Hott's reports, in the *Religious Telescope*, of centenary meetings held in the conferences and on other occasions, had not a little to do in stimulating the aims and successes of the year's distinctive undertakings.

These years of Church-wide endeavors, and the friendly relations they brought, made this working church officer not only a prominent figure in the connectional activities of the denomination, but a man ardently loved for his spirit and work's sake. His ability as a preacher and writer became well known during this period. His broad sympathies with men and worthy causes had had a practical exemplification. His zeal, intelligence, and capacity for safe leadership had been abundantly demonstrated. His piety and charity were unquestioned. While a man of strong and positive convictions relating to essential moral principles, as well as of church polity, he was nevertheless so respectful of the opinions and rights of others, and so conciliatory in his spirit toward those differing with him in matters of principle or expediency, he had grown to have a mighty hold on the confidence and heart of the Church. In these qualities will be found the chief reasons for his growing popularity and wide influence as a man and as a leader in aggressive Christian work.

Mr. Hott's happy relations with other general officers of the Church during this quadrennium deserve special mention. He had the confidence and cordial support of the bishops at the conferences and elsewhere. His office brought him into close associations with the Missionary Secretary, the Rev. D. K. Flickinger, so long the indefatigable worker in that field. He came, likewise, into intimate touch with Dr. W. J. Shuey, the Agent of the United Brethren Publishing House, which resulted in a friendship between them like that of Jonathan and David. His frequent con-

tributions to the *Religious Telescope* relating to his work and on general subjects, brought him into close contact with the editor of that paper, the Rev. Milton Wright, with whom he maintained most agreeable relations. The same is true of the mutual cordiality which existed between himself and Dr. D. Berger, editor of the Sunday-school literature, and the Rev. William Mittendorf, the German editor, and of the members of the several Church boards.

That his rare ability to work harmoniously with others, and whose duties caused the frequent crossing of paths, and his uniform brotherly spirit and bearing, had much to do with the forming and perpetuating of these delightful friendships and fellowships, there is no question. In these dominating qualities are to be found the mainspring to his manly strength and to his commanding leadership and power in very wide relations with fellow-men.

## CHAPTER V.

### EDITORIAL CAREER.

THE seventeenth General Conference met at Westfield, Illinois, May 10, 1877. The preceding four years had witnessed marked advances in the Church. The membership was now 144,881, a gain of more than nineteen thousand in four years. In the same period there was an increase of two hundred and fifty-two houses of worship, with corresponding growth in all the connectional interests. One hundred and twenty delegates, besides the four bishops, were entitled to seats in the Conference. The secret-society question received the attention of the Conference, the rule of the Church being changed somewhat, but not essentially modified in its prohibitory features. Lay delegation in the annual conferences was authorized, and *pro rata* representation and other progressive measures received substantial encouragement. An educational address was delivered by the Rev. E. S. Chapman, and Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner preached an appropriate sermon on the character and work of Bishop David Edwards, who had died June 6, 1876. The Conference was in session twelve days, and the business was participated in with the earnestness of men loyal to Christ and the Church.

J. W. Hott had been elected for the third time to represent his conference in this quadrennial assembly. His colleagues were the same as in the two previous conferences. Though he had not been working within the conference for four years, his reelection at the head

of his delegation was a worthy tribute to the high esteem in which he was held throughout the Church in Virginia.

At this General Conference the secret-society question was made an issue in the election of some of the general officers of the Church, as had previously been the case. For eight years the columns of the *Religious Telescope* were under the most vigilant radical supervision. Speaking of this fact, Dr. Berger, in his history of the Church, says: "The very intensity of its radicalism began in time to react upon itself, and many earnest supporters of the Church law on secrecy desired a change in the control of the paper, and a new editor, of more moderate views, was chosen, to give a truer expression of the sentiment of the Church." This man was James W. Hott. His election was not only a recognition of his strong intellectual manhood and his varied experience in pastoral and general church work, but rather of that higher wisdom which he was believed to possess, the capacity for calm and judicious leadership in directing the thought and work of the denomination.

Though the choice fell upon one who was by education and loyalty to the traditions of the Church a radical, and though he had stood with the radical party on the one exciting question in the two previous General Conferences, he was not by nature or principle an extreme radical. This had been clearly demonstrated in his record as a preacher in the Civil War. No matter what he was in his sentiments by inheritance, or what he may have thought himself to be in his earlier years, in mature life, and with the wider experience and observation afforded by four years of mingling with representative people, ministers and laymen, widely through the Church in the discharge of official duties, he came to see the wisdom of moderate views on the vexing question at issue. He could not be an extrem-

ist, either radical or liberal. And yet his loyalty to the Church was always above successful challenge. So when a new editor was to be chosen for the chief organ of the denomination, it was natural that a man with a true heart and a conciliatory spirit should be selected. This meant that even many who were classed as radicals were weary of the extreme radicalism of the paper. That is the primary reason the editorial control of the *Religious Telescope* was placed in the hands of Mr. Hott in 1877. And his able management of the paper in the twelve years that followed proved the wisdom of the choice.

The General Conference, however, that put this new occupant in the editorial chair, elected the Rev. W. O. Tobey, a pronounced radical, to be assistant editor. Mr. Tobey had been the associate editor the four years before under the rigid radical regimen. He was a ready and scholarly writer, faithful, painstaking, and churchly, but it was not felt that the destinies of the paper, in such a stormy period, could be safely entrusted to him. While Mr. Hott possessed the qualities of wise conservatism and conciliation, Mr. Tobey was extreme and unyielding. Both were alike honest in their convictions, but they were utterly unlike in partisan temper and attitude toward those differing with them on questions in dispute in the Church. Their dispositions were naturally and sharply antagonistic. This antagonism, however, it should be said, was never bitter nor unbrotherly. It was rather of unlike natures which could never be wholly congenial.

During the entire time of Mr. Tobey's connection with the paper he wrote over a signature. This was the policy of the times, not that an associate editorship was an impossibility, but that the editors should each be held responsible for his own utterances. Mr. Hott preferred the continuance of this order, and it was evidently to his advantage that it should not be changed

at the time he entered on his editorial duties; for, the Church cared not so much for the expressions of the paper as such, as it did for those of the men in charge of the paper, as judged by their personal writings. Mr. Hott did not hesitate to face the issues which this personal responsibility involved. In harmony with his own convictions, he adopted a policy which was steadily maintained through the years. The attitude of the paper, at first, was not so much changed as was its tone. If he did not change its head, he did change its heart. In this way he came to be loved and trusted, and, to the great body of the Church, conducted the paper with marked acceptability.

He was a well-known writer in the Church long before he became an editor. From the time of his early ministry he had been a frequent contributor to the Church press and other periodicals. Out of a deep personal experience as a Christian he was always able to strike a responsive chord in the lives of those whom he touched through his pen, as he had done by his preaching. Indeed, his tact and readiness in writing had always shown his unusual aptitude in the field of church journalism, and that he possessed the real instinct of the religious editor. This mysterious and indefinable gift was manifest not only in the character and variety of his writings, but in the wakeful enterprise, vigor, and sprightliness which ever characterized the management of his paper.

In his editorial greeting, published June 13, 1877, Mr. Hott's type of mind and spirit are clearly seen. He says: "The editorial control of the *Religious Telescope* is a duty which comes to my hand unanticipated, and it is not without many fears that I have accepted a responsibility so great. Accustomed, till recently, to work in the pulpit and pastoral relation, from early life, it has cost a severe struggle to undertake a work of so great interest, knowing that former study and habits have not been such as to prepare me for it.



"I cannot be wholly ignorant of the vast interests of the Church and the souls of the people of our communion, depending in a large measure upon the spirit and tone of our Church periodical. At least enough is known to suggest the sacredness of the trust committed to my care. The wants of the people are not only such as require variety of talents and gifts, but, being spiritual and eternal, they demand the purest purpose of the heart.

"The bonds which unite us in this great Church fellowship are of the noblest kind known on earth, and as such can only be strengthened by helps which supply the growth of our better nature and lead us to a more complete communion with God. When William Otterbein saw Martin Boehm filled with the spirit of Christ he embraced him, and exclaimed, 'We are brethren.'"

Other pertinent references to our Church history follow. The editor then emphasizes the duty of the Church to make the preaching of Christ its supreme business, and then adds: "This fact shows us clearly that if we as a Church are to grow and prosper, we must be essentially and intensely aggressive. If our churches are to grow up pure and strong and so be preserved for the generations to come, there must be felt in every channel the thought of an earnest life," etc.

To these ends, and to the promotion of all the departments of the Church, Mr. Hott pledged unstinted devotion, hoping "to be honest, impartial, and kind in associations with the brethren, and I trust most of all to please God."

There is pervading the entire greeting the earnest desire to serve the highest interests of the Church, to increase the influence of the Church organ, and also the feeling that success must depend largely on the co-operation of others.

While Mr. Hott worked with remarkable ease, he

nevertheless found his editorial duties too laborious for his physical strength. For several weeks at one time he suffered from a severe attack of nervous prostration. Though he recovered slowly from this breakdown, he at length regained his strength and came to the end of the quadrennium in his usual vigor and health.

The General Conference of 1881 met in Lisbon, Iowa. It was the largest Conference in the history of the Church, up to that time. With the strong progressive spirit manifest, there was a decided weakening on the traditional principles, so called, of the Church, as compared with the four years previous, a test vote standing sixty-eight radical to fifty-seven liberal. But there was less disposition on the liberal side to discuss the mooted question than there had been for many years, one of the leading liberals declaring that, personally, he had no more battles to fight, adding, "I believe our people will settle this question whether we are willing to do it or not." The new accessions to the Church and to the ministry, and a broader spirit of church life were plainly doing what could not be done by law and argument.

J. W. Hott was reëlected editor of the *Religious Telescope* by a very flattering vote. This was a splendid testimonial of approval of his last four years' work. He was again a member of the Conference from Virginia, his associate delegates being J. W. Howe and A. M. Evers. It is safe to say that no more active and influential member occupied a seat in the body.

Through his influence the Conference decided to have but one editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and that he should be given the authority to choose his own assistant, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Publishing House. In harmony with this action, the present writer was chosen assistant editor, serving eight years in that relation. My close asso-

ciation with Mr. Hott during those years of editorial colabor was unmarred with a single collision, and left not behind the memory of a single unpleasant incident. The intimacy of these years only served to increase my esteem and to deepen my affection for an intimate daily fellow-worker. The more I knew of him in the varied relations in which I was privileged to meet him, the more I saw in him to respect, to admire, and to honor.

The editor's policy as he entered on his second term's work was well indicated in the following words from his new greeting, June 15, 1881: "While the *Telescope* shall be kept in the front ranks of reform, while it shall be conservative and unflinching in its maintenance of the principles, usages, and institutions of the Church, it shall aim to be broad, catholic, and Christian in every case." The spirit and purpose of this declaration were too plain to be misunderstood.

There were three things during this quadrennial term which made this period especially notable to Editor Hott. The first was his being sent as a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference, held in London in September, 1881, and his subsequent travels in Europe, Palestine, and Egypt, which will be spoken of particularly elsewhere. The second was the death of his honored father, in 1884, previously mentioned; and third, the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the *Religious Telescope*, December 31, 1884. This latter event marked an important era in the journalism of the Church, and was auspiciously observed by issuing a special historical number of the paper, with cover and illustrations. Nothing so elaborate had ever been undertaken before in the Church. It was a notable achievement, admirably conceived and executed, and betokening praiseworthy skill and enterprise on the part of the editor and publisher.

In June, 1882, Mr. Hott received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from both Western and Avalon

colleges, a tribute to his character and eminent services in the Church worthily bestowed.

The General Conference of 1885 met May 14, in Fostoria, Ohio. The quadrennium had been a period of general prosperity and growth, the membership of the Church having increased nearly 11,000. In the address of the Board of Bishops, the Conference was advised to give special attention to the Constitution of the Church, that a question that had caused long and animated discussion might be settled. Early in the session a committee was appointed to consider this matter. The committee recommended the appointment of a "Church Commission" of twenty-seven members, "to consider our present Confession of Faith and Constitution, and prepare such a form of belief, and such amended fundamental rules for the government of the Church in the future as will, in their judgment, be best adapted to secure its growth and efficiency in the work of evangelizing the world."

This opened the way for one of the most remarkable debates ever known in the councils of the Church, at the close of which the plan for the revising of the Confession of Faith and amending the Constitution was approved by the decisive vote of 78 to 42. This was a notable triumph for the growing liberal sentiment in the Church, and it marks the beginning of a broader and freer church life. At this Conference a modified rule on secret societies, proposed by the same committee submitting the previous proposition, was adopted by a vote of 76 to 38.

Dr. Hott was a member of this celebrated "Committee No. 6," and was an influential champion of its recommendations. That the *Telescope*, under his direction, had contributed largely to these results is beyond dispute. That he should have been reëlected to its editorial control after these enactments so vitally to effect the future life and polity of the Church, and

by a larger vote than he had ever received, was an endorsement well merited.

On the twelfth day of the General Conference the members of the Church Commission were elected; five from each of the episcopal districts except the Pacific Coast District, which was to have but two—twenty-seven in all. J. W. Hott was one of those chosen to represent the East District. When the Commission met in Dayton, Ohio, in November, 1885, he served on the Committee on Confession of Faith, being one of its most wakeful members. His associates on this committee were: Bishops J. J. Glossbrenner, N. Castle, and M. Wright, Drs. H. Garst, G. A. Funkhouser, and W. M. Beardshear, and Revs. J. R. Evans and P. C. Hetzler. After being in session six days, the Commission agreed upon a revised Confession of Faith and an amended Constitution for the Church. This work was then submitted to the whole Church for approval or rejection at the general election of delegates to the General Conference in November, 1888, after three years' consideration and discussion, and was almost unanimously approved.

In his salutation on beginning his third term in the editorial work, June 10, 1885, Dr. Hott pledged his most earnest effort "to adapt the paper more than ever to the wants of the entire Church." In the same connection he also says: "It is impossible for the editor not to have his own personal opinions upon the various subjects that are agitated among us. But should it appear that he has too much selfishness and too little charity and grace to accord to others their personal rights and opinions without constant antagonism and criticism or slight, he will justly be regarded as unfitted and unworthy to edit a paper for the sons of Otterbein and Boehm, who gave origin to our Church name in the words, 'We are brethren.'"

In the same paper in which these utterances are

found is an editorial entitled, "What to Do Now," in which counsel is given to "mutual toleration of differences of sentiments as to the non-substantials of religion, and consecration to the great mission of saving men from formality and sin and worldly conformity, by the power of Christ and his gospel." These are urged as essential conditions to peace and prosperity.

Another introductory editorial was on "The Commission and Constitution." In this the editor states plainly what the policy of the *Telescope* would be in regard to the actions of the General Conference. He then adds: "The Commission for the revision of the Constitution and Confession of Faith of the Church is now a fact in our Church, and it is to be so regarded by all."

The four years that followed were years of extended and animated discussion in the Church organ. The "Commission Act" and what it contemplated furnished a great variety of themes for both liberal and radical writers. The editor, however, kept a strong hand on the helm. He wisely maintained that the things settled by the General Conference should be regarded as settled, and that discussion should be confined to future and pertinent questions.

This policy was scrupulously followed throughout the quadrennium. During this transition era the editor maintained a serene and lovable spirit. He met with great opposition, bitter things being said about him, but he never turned aside from what he felt to be the path of duty. He never became vindictive or partisan, even in the treatment of those who were the most stoutly opposed to his editorial policy.

I was with him during much of this memorable struggle. His opponents were uniformly treated with Christian courtesy and fairness. It was this policy, steadfastly adhered to, that strengthened his course and that weakened the opposition. The very spirit of



his critics helped him, and this on the principle that nothing builds up a cause like persecution.

For those that were conscientious and consistent in their opposition to his editorial policy he entertained the most profound respect and esteem. While differing with them, he never became embittered against them. In this he demonstrated the strength of his own character and the value of his service to the Church, as in nothing else. With him the cause was more than personal pique or pride, and he was satisfied to see it triumph.

The twelve years of Dr. Hott's editorial career embrace a period of peculiar unrest and testing in the Church. That he made no mistakes would not be claimed by his most ardent friends, but it is easily within the truth to say, that to his judicious and kindly leadership, as much as to any other human agency, was due the successful passing of the Church from narrow and restrained conditions to a life and power fraught with larger possibilities.

To what was his large success in the field of religious journalism due? Not alone to his natural gifts or to his acquired abilities, though he was well endowed in both of these respects. Nor is it to be accounted for on the ground of mere intellectual sagacity, magnetic enthusiasm, or to his rare facility in adapting himself to the age in which he lived, though these were among his largely developed traits. Rather, he was a man of unusual heart power, and this dominated his editorial life and thought as it did his pulpit efforts. His writings, while evincing a wide and firm grasp of truth, expressed with logical clearness and force, were pre-eminently of a devotional or spiritual type. They possessed that vital quality, real, though unseen, that impresses and wins men, and which is not easily defined. He had a passion for souls, and with it the genius for winning them, both by tongue and pen.

He was a strong and versatile writer. He was especially happy in choosing titles for his editorials. He had no hobbies. He did not follow the beaten paths. His knowledge, sympathies, and endeavors were world-wide in their reach.

In his editorial work on the *Telescope*, Dr. Hott found a broad field for the exercise of his fruitful gifts. His work was uniformly performed with enthusiasm, as if he enjoyed it, as he surely did.

He had exalted ideals of the province and power of the religious press as an agency for good in the world. His skill in the management of the paper was not less marked than were his ability and wisdom as a writer. He was broad-minded in his recognition and treatment of men throughout the Church, though occasionally he was accused of being narrow and sectional in his feelings. Brethren in the East sometimes thought him partial to the West, and brethren in the West at times complained of his favoritism for the East. These very criticisms were unmistakable evidences of his independence and impartiality. He occupied an eminence which enabled him to survey the whole Church with its diversified conditions and needs, while his critics occupied lower planes and were often influenced by local and personal considerations.

His kindliness of spirit toward those who differed with him on church questions, and his generous treatment of them, was noticeable in the courtesies shown them, and in the cordial recognition given them in frequent editorial expressions.

In speaking of courtesy and the spirit of conciliation for which Dr. Hott was noted, not only as an editor, but as a man, for he was ever a dignified Christian gentleman, it is well to remember that the entire period of his twelve years' editorial life was largely given to earnest discussion of matters of church polity and kindred questions. He came to this throne of power



just as the transition from a lower to a higher plane of church life and activity was beginning, and from a sphere narrow and circumscribed by restrictive legislation and impractical traditions to an open and broad field for untrammelled service in the world's evangelization. During these years the *Telescope* rendered zealous and heroic service on behalf of the Church and its forward movements.

While discharging his duties with becoming modesty, Dr. Hott did not lack the courage to follow his convictions of right. His editorials will bear careful study. They show a man doing his own thinking, not only on church questions, but on world-wide conditions and movements. They rarely contain lengthy quotations from contemporary editors or from other writings. He preferred mentally to digest what he read, and then to give the results of his own independent thinking. He gathered precious ores from the mines of the whole world, from which he extracted the rich coin of current and vital thought which he sent out bright from the mint of his own brain.

His writings do not consist of vapid moralizings on the good and wise sayings of other people. Neither do they bear the air of patronizing lectures, or "I told you so" admonitions.

The products of his pen have a freshness, variety, humanness, and religious quality that made him the popular editor he was. He was not an advice-giver, but a leader in religious thought and activity. He wore no clouded spectacles, he had no pet theories, religious or otherwise, to which he was wedded, he was not a reformer on paper, he was not a time-server, but an open, frank, thoughtful, sympathetic, helpful writer for young and old, for the strong and prosperous, and for the weak, tempted, and discouraged. He was a magnetic editor as he was a magnetic preacher.

It has been said by a writer of large experience, him-

self an editor, that "the ideal editor fulfills a threefold function—he is creator, administrator, and writer. He forms his own conception of what the journal is to be, what place it is to fill, what work it is to do, what circle of readers it is to address; he organizes it to do that work, secures the writers, examines their contributions, measures them by their relation to his conception and their adaptation to its execution; and he molds all writers by his own strong, clear, vigorous writing; leads by his pen, and others follow. Now it is very rare that any editor fulfills all three functions." And yet it may be truthfully said that Dr. Hott possessed this rare ability in a very essential sense, winning for himself recognition as a very prince of religious journalists. He usually secured his best contributions by special solicitation from men of well-known ability as writers. This was before the days of publishing "syndicate" articles, a custom now much in vogue, which tends greatly to cheapen a paper in the estimation of thoughtful readers, no matter how meritorious the articles thus secured in themselves may be. No journal, religious or secular, has ever gained commanding influence through communications of that sort. So as editor of the *Religious Telescope* Dr. Hott gave his paper an individuality and a power by his ability to fulfill the functions of creator, administrator, and writer, which justly entitle him to the rank of an ideal editor. His editorial work has ceased, but his editorial influence will abide as a rich heritage to the Church and the world.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EDITORIAL TABLE TALK.

IN this chapter it is proposed to give some extracts from Dr. Hott's varied editorial writings which will serve to indicate the general character, style, and spirit of his thought, as well as to show the principles and motives which were supreme in his life. An entire volume could easily be made up of choice utterances, wise, pungent, and gracious, from this source. Such a collection of extracts would not only prove instructive and inspiring to the general reader, but as an index to the life of the man it would have surpassing value. But the present purpose is not to attempt a work so extended or exhaustive, but rather to bring together a few paragraphs from his editorials which deserve to be printed and preserved in connection with the story of his life.

Writing of his mother, in 1884, soon after the death of his father, Dr. Hott said: "Through all these years of toil and trial and care and sickness and love she has been the guardian angel of light in our joyous home. Her heart was the treasury where we left our childish cares and sorrows."

Speaking of his father in the same connection, he paid to him this beautiful tribute: "He is with the angels now, and will hardly care for the poor tribute of love wounded hearts can pay. His honesty would stop the pen which would dare to record a flattering word; and yet, the reader will allow that we put one tribute on the tomb of one who subscribed for and read the

*Telescope* from its first issue, and to whom it ever came as a message from God, next to the Bible.

"Father was an honest man. He went to heaven without a dishonest penny left to his family. Living among the society of friends, scrupulously honest, any deflection would have been easily detected. One of them said, 'He was a guiding star.' In word, promise, dealing, religious profession he never knew deception. He had the common weaknesses of men, but was honest in his heart of hearts. No father ever held to him the profounder faith of his family as to piety and moral integrity than he. He was the first and last man in whom they trusted as a Christian."

What of a boy and man who had such a father and mother, and who loved them with such reverent devotion? He will never go far wrong. His affection for his parents in his childhood found unfailling expression in the respect and obedience due them, and in manhood, with the cares and responsibilities of his own home, and in the midst of the strenuous demands of official duties, he never ceased to cherish with a tender fondness the ones to whom he was not only indebted for his being, but for the heritage of wise and godly training.

Dr. Hott had a very high appreciation of friendship. Once when describing "Some Kinds of Friends" he mentioned last of all one of whom he says: "Somehow he loves you. You do not know how or why he does so, but you can see and feel that you have a place in his heart. He is pleased when you show appreciations, because somehow he lets you feel that your sympathy and good opinion and love are something within themselves which he prizes highly. He rejoices in your superiority and independence. When your own mind and heart act for themselves, he looks upon them with feeling somewhat akin to those of a mother's heart when she sees her babe stand up and walk across the floor alone.

When you enter upon a career of prosperity he rejoices with you and bids you God-speed. He judges your worth, and breathes a double blessing on your achievement. When you sorrow and are sore afflicted, he pours out his tears with yours, and through all the long dark night of sorrow he sits at your side and mysteriously lifts the burden and gloom from your heavy heart by the silent tears that fall and the warm heart-throb that yearns to bear away your pains. When you suffer and when you sin, he still comes close to your side and tenderly, lovingly lifts you up to your former self again. He never lets you go. Through changes of youth, through trials of manhood, through falls and blunders and pains and sorrows and defeats and successes he still holds fast your hand, and ever tries to lift you up. He reminds you of your mother. He makes you think of Christ, or the God of boundless sympathy and love, somewhere in the universe, who holds you up. Such a friend is worth millions. Be such a friend as that to some sad heart. Surely it is Christlike to be such."

On "Keeping Sweet": "A man to be a success as a Christian must absolutely keep sweet. Pickles may do well enough in their place; but if it please the Master, let us have as few of them in the church as possible. Let us keep our people sweet by seeking to have ourselves and them filled with the love of Christ."

In the midst of a great revival in which he was an interested and valued worker, the editor wrote: "Men are not made godlike by towering intellect, or by marvelous intellectual achievements, but by humble and unsullied love. The likeness is a heart likeness. Men have divine power who have heart power. This heart power is not a mere blubber of the emotions, but a tremendous engine which drives the whole machinery of life. It enables a man to undertake that which is to others regarded as impossible. It makes the world's heroes, and to heroism adds giant achievements. Heart

power strikes the heart and takes possession of the citadel of man's nature. A preacher without a heart behind his work is a feeble instrument in the Master's cause, no matter how talented or eloquent he may be."

In an editorial homily on "Old Nails," a stinging rebuke is given to those who practice repeating old sermons, "big sermons," "sugar-sticks." They often remind the hearer of the remark of the colored brother to his master respecting the rock-powder with which he was trying to burst a rock: "To tell the truth, massa," he said, "I beliebe dat powder was shot once afore." "These old sermons, like rusty nails, will not drive well. They will not fasten in a sure place. They are often weak just where they should be strong. It may seem like economy and time-saving to use these rusty old sermons, but it is not so. If you want to have real sweetness and pleasure in preaching the blessed word of Christ you must throw away the old sermons and dig down into the sacred mine of God's wealth, and bring out the burning new truths which God has planted there especially for us."

This advice was strictly in harmony with the writer's own practice.

On "Care for the Children": "The little boy of to-day will be the preacher and teacher and business-man of to-morrow. The little girl of to-day will be the tender minister of the home to-morrow. In a few days the whole mass of men and women who stand in the current of toil and trade to-day will be in eternity, and the children you pass indifferently by will stand in their places. He who speaks a kind word to the child of to-day puts a smile on the brow of to-morrow. He who directs the current of thought, affection, and pursuit of the child of to-day makes the destiny of to-morrow. Care for the children."

Few men have written more felicitously of home than did the editor of the *Telescope* at various times. He

himself had a beautiful home, and he knew well the secret of its delightful charms. He says: "Home is the synonym of love. And yet there are homes, so called, with but little love; and so it comes to pass that there are homes and homes where husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, keep the heart concealed. But here is not home. Give us the home where the heart of love comes to the forefront; where the husband loves the wife, and is not afraid to let her know it; where he loves his children, and is willing that it should go on record. There are homes that are shriveled and dying, and from which the children turn away to haunts of vice, frozen to death because there is no love, deep and blessed, building its foundations of faith and its fires of devotion."

A good lesson is taught, characteristically drawn from an incident once observed in his travels, which was put into an editorial entitled "On the Wrong Train." One paragraph reads: "A young man, seeking a companion for life in his own home, who chooses a haughty spirit or a gadabout, dancing, flirt of a girl, links his destiny with the wrong train. She will land him in disgrace. He would better go to the prayer-meeting to seek a wife, and to the home of pious influences and habits. He will reach a better destination by a much more pleasant route."

The holiday greetings of Dr. Hott always contained sweet and inspiring messages of hope, cheer, and trust. At Christmas, 1885, he said: "We would wipe away every sorrowful tear on this glad day. We would smooth out every furrow from the cheek of the aged with the delight which should spread over every countenance. We would place a smile on every cheek and a song in every mouth. The laughter should be holy gladness, and the song a melody of praise to our God. We would garnish the overshadowing heavens with the streams of light, and over every sorrow of the past a



bow of promise should span eternal arches of hope for the times to come."

In the same year this was a part of his New-Year greeting: "A happy New Year! What better than this can we wish you? May your hearts be filled with love to God and your fellow-men, and your own hearts reap the harvest which comes from a life growing out of such a spirit. May every day of your life prove a step heavenward—homeward—to the land of song unending, and glory unclouded, bliss eternal."

Thanksgiving, 1888: "And so the annual season of our thanksgiving has come again. Again we turn our opening hearts to the great Sun, whose beams of love and tenderness have shone upon us another full year. The winter brought of snow and rain. The spring-time brought the carpeted green of earth, and new hope and promise in a newly-waking life. The summer fulfilled the promise of the opening spring, and handed the fruits and grains to autumn to ripen for the garner and storehouse; and so God has been merciful to all his people."

The preaching needed to-day: "The spiritual preacher of to-day is the man the people want to hear. He who comes freshest from the throne of God will have the people to hear him, and that gladly. The man who brings the burning message of Christ and eternal things to the people with the loving heart of the Master will have no lack of hearers." This was said in a strong editorial on "The Christianity of To-day."

As editor of the *Telescope*, Dr. Hott never lost his passion for soul-winning. In the revival season he always sought to make the paper especially helpful to pastors. In February, 1886, in writing of the greatest of all works, he said: "It is the greatest of all works to lead a soul to Christ, when looked upon from its manward and benevolent side. What can any man do



for a fellow to be compared with introducing him to the acquaintance and fellowship of such a Christ?"

A beautiful and tender Easter message, 1886, opens thus: "The world saw a new life on the morning of the third day after the burial of Jesus. While Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome prepared the spices that they might come and anoint the body of Jesus, the angels were coming down to open the grave, not for the anointing, but for the coming forth of the living Jesus. The events of that morning are wonderful to contemplate."

Power of a tear: "The mightiest material force in the world is a tear. The most eloquent utterance that is ever made by man to his fellow-man is that made in a tear. It is the most divine of all expressions. It is nearer God than ten thousand armies. It is the tear that utters the thought of the soul. It speaks the direct language of the inner being. Words come of intellect and reason and thought. Tears come from the heart. Words speak the conclusions of cold logic, stern and real. The tear is just the soul speaking, regardless of all that is in the universe. It asks no questions about this or that, about the here or the yonder. It tells its own pathetic and tender story, without regard to aught that is, and hindered by all that words can mention. The tear is no irrigation of thought; it is the rainfall of the clear, lofty heavens of the soul; it is the dew-fall from the inner skies; it is the distilled manna of God in our wilderness."

Memorial Day suggested a beautiful tribute to the ministry of flowers on many occasions, and closes as follows: "Never comes the ministry of flowers so sweet and so profound as when they garland the chamber and the casket where lies a mother, a sister, a wife, a daughter, or a darling little babe cold and quiet in the bosom of death. What language of love and blinding hope and unmeasured sorrow they tell! The pil-

low of bloom with the immortelle of 'Mother,' 'Rest,'—what love is pillowed there! That harp of beauty and fragrance, what a strain of sorrow floats over its silent strings of roses and lilies and forget-me-nots! Those blooming crowns remind us of love's coronation."

When in California, in 1887, Dr. Hott met with a painful accident, which led to the writing of a suggestive meditation on "Shut in with God," in which the following touching paragraph occurs: "For two weeks the writer has been held the prisoner of suffering and disappointment. Wherein he has been shut out from the pursuits and plans and hopes of life, he has been shut in with God. New fields of meditation have been opened. Other arenas of grace have been discovered. Places and plans of God's love and goodness in surprising communion with him have been made known. Where before there was naught but barren and desolate deserts, there have sprung up fountains of living water. Where there was no voice of love and cheer, there have been all day long the singing of birds and the music of celestial spheres."

What compensations are here for pain and disappointment!

Some of Dr. Hott's sayings are of the type of proverbs, choice epigrams, happy sentences, bright and luminous with the wisdom that comes from above. A few of thousands which might be given follow, closing this chapter:

"The man who manifests a spirit thoroughly candid and Christian is worthy of the respect of his stoutest opponents, and has it."

"Beware of mingling in a family feud or a church quarrel."

"Remember that a clean conscience is worth more than all gold."

"It does not matter how ugly a man is if **his heart is only right.**"

"It is to the discredit of the church when the surroundings of a church-house or parsonage are wanting in neatness and good order."

"Original men are wanted nowadays—men who are heroic and wise enough to do good in the every-day opportunities of life."

"Faith travels best up hill."

"Goodness toils by its own methods. It wins by its own smiles. It conquers with its own sword of gold."

"Test your religion by the command to love your enemies."

"The love of novelty has destroyed thousands of souls."

"Prayer is the sublimest attitude ever assumed by fallen man."

"The Christian's joy is one of love, of friendship, of safety, of inheritance, of life, beauty, hope, triumph, and assurance. It is the joy of the day—an eternal day."

"Backbone in character is a good thing where it has a body to suit it."

"If God appoints the duty, he will also give the strength."

"The desire for immediate returns has always been shortsighted and at war with the true riches of faith."

"No man can attain to a life of greatness or grandeur or goodness without his mind and heart are first possessed of a great desire. Great deeds are born of great desires and great ambitions. Great lives come of great ideas."

"In soul-saving it is of supreme importance that we rightly appreciate the value of saving one soul. Individual, personal work is the most successful of all efforts for souls."

"It is the utmost folly to run after one's accusers. Nothing is to be gained by so doing, and much may be lost."

"No man can safely run the heavenly way who does not keep his eye steadily on the track. The success of the Christian does not depend so much on good resolutions and good impulses and good desires, good as all these are and essential, as upon constant faithfulness. Steady, ceaseless piety, which watches every moment, will see the signal of danger and discern the finger-board of God."

"At home is the place to establish the fundamentals of a pious life. Christ told the demoniac to go home to his own house, and show his kindred what great things the Lord had done for him. There is where he sends us now."

"No one should trouble himself about false accusations. Let him be sure they are false, and then leave them to die unnoticed. They will die, and the darts of the accuser will recoil upon himself and to his certain shame and sorrow."

"The world will keep Christmas to the end of time. Its memories will grow more hallowed and sweet with every passing year."

"There is no duty in which you may not find a pleasure for Christ's sake."

"Just a few grains of holy living are worth more than a bushel of loud professions."

"We will never make friends by lamenting that we have none, or by blaming others for our not being the object of the good feelings and kindly considerations of those about us. We would better set ourselves to loving somebody."

"God's calendar has but one day—that is to-day."

"Satan's calendar has but one day—that is to-morrow."

"There is not a grief possible to the human heart that Jesus cannot assuage. There is not a sorrow that can press the soul that he cannot lift. There is not a trouble that can roll over the bosom of mortals that

Christ cannot roll back. His presence is paradise. His truth is a rock of safety. His promise is a draft on infinite resources. His providences are the training-school of happiness. His love is heaven."

"Love is a giver, and is thus excellent above all other graces."

"The opportunity of an education is an opportunity that comes to life but once. If the strategic hour is lost once, it is lost forever."

"Would you move men to a better life, then move yourself."

"Awhile ago there were great councils of the church to discuss and proclaim dogmas and try heretics; but to-day the sublimest spectacle the sun ever looked upon since it saw God in human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ is the union of Christian effort in the accomplishing of the objects for which Jesus, the Son of God, died on Calvary eighteen hundred years ago."

"Make Christ and his love and his religion supreme in your home, and you will always have a happy home."

"A great heart and a noble soul cannot descend to personal animosities and bitter hatreds even toward an enemy."

Those who knew James W. Hott well will easily recognize in these brief sayings of his a striking likeness of him as a man and as a humble follower of the **M**an of Galilee.

## CHAPTER VII.

### TRAVELER, LECTURER, AUTHOR.

THE General Conference of 1881 authorized the appointment of two delegates to attend the Methodist Ecumenical Conference, to be held in London, in September of that year. There was some objection to this action on the ground that the United Brethren Church is not a Methodist body. However, it was agreed that, as the conference was to be made up of representatives from churches holding the Arminian theology, it was perfectly consistent for the United Brethren to have representation in this important gathering. Thereupon, Dr. H. A. Thompson and the Rev. J. W. Hott were appointed delegates, with the Rev. W. J. Shuey and Dr. Z. Warner as alternates.

For weeks following the General Conference, Mr. Hott was busy in arranging for his trip abroad. July 27 he took his leave of Dayton, placing the *Religious Telescope* in the hands of his new assistant, who had then been in the office but two weeks. He first went to his old home in Virginia, where he left his family with his parents, with whom they were to sojourn during his absence.

After the editor's departure, his assistant, in an editorial entitled, "Behind the Editor's Back," took occasion to say some things about him that would serve to give his readers a better knowledge of his character and work, and to awaken special interest in his foreign travels. After giving a brief sketch of the life and labors of Mr. Hott, the editorial referred to said: "A delicate and beautiful compliment was paid Brother

Hott at the General Conference when the bishops appointed him, with Dr. Thompson, to represent the United Brethren Church in the Ecumenical Conference of Arminian and Methodist churches which meets in London, England, in the early part of September next. . . . He will leave New York on the steamer *City of Berlin* August 6. He expects to make a tour through England, Scotland, and Ireland before the conference, and afterwards spend a month on the continent, going as far east as Switzerland. This trip will occupy a number of weeks, and will furnish the editor a grand opportunity for needed rest and that recuperation which wearied human nature requires. And the whole Church will join in the prayer that such rest and recuperation of body and mind may come to him as will enable him yet to give many years to the Master's service. Brother Hott will continue to write for the *Telescope* during his absence. The weekly letters from his pen which we shall have will be a feature of general interest and delight to all the *Telescope* family."

After a farewell meeting, held in the old John Street Methodist Church, in New York, in which many of the delegates to the London conference participated, the good ship, *City of Berlin*, one of the best steamers then crossing the Atlantic, was boarded, and the good-bys to friends and native land were taken.

The voyage across the Atlantic, barring sea-sickness, was a delightful one. The passengers were a noble company of men and women, many of them having eminence in different parts of the United States—ministers, lawyers, journalists, prominent business men, and others. In an account of the voyage, in a letter to the *Telescope*, Mr. Hott said: "It is to be doubted whether ever a company of persons crossed the Atlantic more pleasantly, or found more congenial associations in a voyage. As we near Queenstown, where many per-



sons will leave the ship, there is real sorrow at the thought of parting."

After a voyage of eight days, land was sighted, "the grandest thing possible" at such a time. After passing the custom-house at Queenstown, those intending to land there did not do so owing to the fact that the hotels were crowded, but were taken by special steamer to Cork, where they landed about two o'clock in the morning, having had a delightful moonlight ride up the river Lee.

Here a company of twenty-six was organized for a tour through Ireland, Scotland, and England, under the tourist agent, Mr. E. M. Jenkins, of New York. The trip through the southern part of the Emerald Isle was made on Irish jaunting-cars, two-wheeled vehicles, well suited to sight-seeing. This trip was taken by Mr. Hott with enthusiastic delight. He wrote charming accounts of his visits to historic places, places rendered famous in literature and in connection with notable names. Then his keen eye did not overlook statues and monuments of poets and soldiers and patriots, the old and noted castles, cathedrals, and other places of absorbing interest in this land of legends and romance. His whole being was thrilled with satisfaction as he visited the scenes of the labors of the witty Dean Swift, the poet, Goldsmith, the orator, Burke, the great commentator, Adam Clarke, and others illustrious in history and song.

The same fascinating experiences were enjoyed in Scotland and England. Mr. Hott wrote extensively of all he saw and of the impressions made on him during his travels. He was a close observer, and, besides, his familiarity with history enabled him to "take in" vastly more than is the case with the average traveler. Of him it was said by a friend while he was taking this trip through many lands, that everything he touched stuck to him. This was said in commendation of his



rare facility in observation, and in reference to his ability to describe so well the things his eyes looked upon in the Old World.

But his extensive writing meant a laborious trip; for while his days were spent in sight-seeing and in taking notes, his nights were often largely taken up in writing his graphic sketches for the *Telescope*, while his fellow-travelers were asleep. Yet in all his journeyings he found a strange exhilaration and joy from which he never wearied. Like the eager hunter in pursuit of bewitching game, so this traveler was lured on from day to day with high hopes and with oft-repeated surprises in the privileges and opportunities afforded.

The Ecumenical Conference was in session eight days in London. This was a great meeting, leading divines and educators of the Arminian bodies of the world participating in the deliberations. The inspirational features of the conference, together with its opportunities for world-wide fellowships, were among the chief advantages realized.

During his stay in London, almost two weeks, our visitor was the guest of Mr. W. Saxby and family, who showed him much kindness, which he greatly appreciated. These weeks in the world's metropolis furnished ample opportunities for the study of many phases of London life, and for visiting Westminster Abbey and other places rich in historic and other memories. The results of these observations and study were given in a number of most interesting letters, entitled "Strayings About London." These included accounts of his visits to places and institutions of most absorbing interest with capable guides, thus affording him the best possible advantages for pleasing and instructive observations. Among the privileges he enjoyed while in London, he esteemed none higher than hearing such preachers of renown as Charles H. Spurgeon and Newman Hall, in their own churches.

At the first Mr. Hott's tour abroad was not planned to extend much beyond London; but when there he felt his trip would lack completeness, both for himself and the Church, unless he should farther continue his travels. Hence, on the 17th of September he left London for Rome, going by the way of Paris, where a Sabbath was passed. The stop in this city was short, and yet it was long enough to get a good view of Parisian life. The aim was to join the Palestine company at Pisa, and then visit Florence, the city of art, and then go on to Rome. A few days in this classic city, with its history of thousands of years, and its memories, sacred and otherwise, had entrancing interest. The sight of ancient ruins, the catacombs, and noted paintings of the masters, made a profound impression.

A week was spent at Athens, a week in Constantinople, and then the voyage was continued, landing at Beirut, the seaport of Syria. From here a tour of Syria and the Holy Land was made, occupying about thirty days. The company consisted of twelve tourists, besides numerous guides, stewards, and muleteers.

The dream of years was now about to be realized, and the land made sacred in Bible story was to be traversed from north to south. The entire trip was made on horseback, and this mode of travel, and dwelling in tents at night, furnished afterwards the theme of one of his most entertaining lectures, "Tent Life in Palestine." It was one of the crowning joys of his life to have had the privilege of visiting Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and the Jordan Valley, and other places sacred in memories indescribably dear to the Christian believer. These scenes made a deep and lasting impression on both his mind and heart.

The time from November 26 to December 6 was spent in Egypt, among its strange scenes and peoples. This land is likewise full of sacred associations, and its customs and history, its monuments and ruins were subjects for most interesting observation and study.

Spending a Sunday in Cairo, Mr. Hott was asked to preach in the United Presbyterian mission in that city. Having only a tourist suit with him, he said to the other preachers of the company who had their clerical apparel with them, "Lend me a suit and I will preach." The suit was forthcoming, and he preached at the hour of the English service, with his usual readiness and delight.

From Alexandria the homeward journey was begun, December 6. The return trip was by the way of Trieste, Venice, Milan, Paris, London, sailing from Liverpool December 22, and reaching New York, January 2, 1882, after an absence of five months.

During these months so full of interest everywhere, Mr. Hott had traveled over 16,000 miles—11,000 on water and 5,000 on land. About 500 miles were traveled on horseback and on donkeys while in Palestine and Egypt—all making a most remarkable journey, rich in varied and instructive experiences and in pleasant and inspiring memories.

Writing for the *Telescope*, the returning editor said: "Glad to get back? Glad to get to America again? Glad to get home? Who can tell how glad? Who can appreciate it but one who has experienced it? The cars had been too slow and the vessel too tardy with the waves. The nights were too long and the days too tedious. But days and nights came and went, and God was good; and Tuesday morning, January 3, I was again with my little family under father's and mother's roof, with brothers and sisters who had come to welcome my return, . . . and that was the happiest hour I ever saw."

"Of all countries upon our globe none is fairer than our own broad land. Egypt and Palestine garner wonderful and sacred treasures of antiquity. Greece, Italy, and indeed all Europe are full of the foot-prints of the giant Time, who has led his hosts of kings, poets,

architects, artists, and warriors over the mountains and the plains, and through cities of renown. There are tropical skies in which the heavens appear more glorious, and under which delicate flowers and fruits grow more luxuriantly in valleys guarded by the Alps and the Appenines. There are in England a wealth and a strength of government which have elements one would like to weave into our own republic; but in America there is an individuality and personal manhood which, with all its perils, is our crown of glory. Our free institutions and free church, and our free people and almost boundless plains, make a garden of retreat for the oppressed of the nations of the earth. Here every man may have a home, every heart its joy, every woman her love, and every man his family. Here God in his providence and grace is working out a new problem in the destiny of the race, and making a new revelation of himself to the world."

Thus it will be seen how the travels of the editor abroad served to enhance his appreciation of his home land. This trip through distant lands was of great value, not only in increasing his resources of knowledge and broadening his life, but in furnishing him almost limitless materials for use in his future work.

The educational value of a trip of this kind is by no means small. There were good opportunities for the study of ancient history under favoring conditions, and for the investigation of present-day conditions, social, political, and otherwise. And with one so ready to see and learn, such a tour had advantages which only those making it can adequately appreciate.

Mr. Hott's travels in this country were very extensive, through many years his work and the interests he represented making this both desirable and necessary. He was such an observant traveler that in this way he gained much in his knowledge of the Church and the country in their wide interests and relations. His

visits to the Yosemite Valley, California, and to other places where the natural scenery has such charms to the appreciative beholder, were utilized, not merely to his own profit, but to multitudes who read the fascinating sketches written from these marvelous scenes. It is safe to say that few travelers had so great ability to get so much out of new and old scenes and in meeting people as did he.

During the winter of 1894 and extending to the following spring, he made an episcopal visit to Africa and Germany, which will be spoken of elsewhere in connection with his official life.

After his return from his travels abroad he was much in demand for lectures. He had been a popular platform speaker, however, for many years before this, one of his best lectures being that on "Character," which was both entertaining and instructive, and having special value to young people. He lectured frequently for churches, schools, and Young Men's Christian Associations on a variety of themes chiefly of a practical character. Of his several lectures on his travels, none was more popular than that "With the Bible in Bible Lands." He had visited these lands with his eyes open, and with the Bible open as well, verifying historic statements and allusions to places, manners and customs, etc., and so he was able to make many things in the Scripture narrative more real and earthly, and yet more divine and precious.

As a lecturer Mr. Hott had the happy faculty of readily putting himself in accord with things. This was evidenced once in a characteristic way when he was to deliver a lecture some distance from Dayton. His train was late. When he arrived at the station where he was directed to stop, he found that the place he was to lecture was four miles distant. He was soon driven to the place, however, where his audience was in waiting. On beginning his lecture, he said: "Ladies

and Gentlemen: I am here at last. I came to the station over yonder by express, and from there here I came by telegraph." He thus struck the humorous side of the audience, and had them with him to the last. In this way, by some clever maneuver, he gained the attention of his hearers when he delivered a missionary lecture or other address, thus overcoming all restraint. The ability thus to bring one's audience into full sympathy with him and his subject is one of the necessary requisites of a popular platform speaker, which he possessed to a notable degree.

As an author Dr. Hott holds deserved eminence. His readiness and experience as an editorial writer were of great value to him in making the important contributions he did to the more permanent literature of his times. Upon his return from his first visit to foreign lands he wrote a large volume entitled "Journeyings in the Old World," which met with popular favor, passing through several editions. It is a meritorious work, and ranks high among books of its class.

In 1886, as editor of the *Telescope*, he wrote a series of articles extending through several months, entitled "Talks with Young Christians." There had been during the previous winter extensive revivals in the Church, and this series of practical papers was undertaken at the suggestion of the present writer. There were many thousands of converts needing simple and suggestive directions in walking in the new life upon which they had entered, and there was no one better fitted to "talk" to them sympathetically and helpfully than one who always carried a heart in passionate love with souls. This one accepted the task, and from the first it was a labor of love. He had not only been a diligent worker in a great revival that winter, in which he had led many into the light and joys of personal salvation, but he had urged the importance of this work



on the whole Church in the earnest and burning messages that went out weekly from his pen.

In 1892 this series of talks was published in a valuable book, entitled, "Sacred Hours with Young Christians," with a very cordial introduction by Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, the veteran Brooklyn pastor. This book is an exceedingly helpful companion for the young disciple of Christ.

Dr. Hott also wrote for "Christian Doctrine," a theological work edited by Bishop Weaver, the chapter on "The Atonement." In this the necessity, the nature, and the extent of the atonement of Christ are ably presented with special reference to the biblical teachings on the subject.

In 1888 a large volume was published entitled, "That Unknown Country, or What Living Men Believe Concerning Punishment after Death," to which Dr. Hott contributed a chapter. This treatise not only gives his views on the subject, but the teaching of the United Brethren Church as well. It is a clear, succinct doctrinal statement, and is an important contribution to the notable discussion with which it is connected.

The introduction to the "Life of Bishop David Edwards," by Dr. L. Davis, and to the "Life of Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner," by Prof. A. W. Drury, D. D., was written by Dr. Hott. He was a warm personal friend and admirer of both of these men, so long in the episcopal office, and his tribute to their character and distinguished services is most befitting—a cordial, grateful, and affectionate tribute and lasting memorial.

All of Mr. Hott's writings, whether for the periodical literature of the Church, or for the books that bear his name, are characteristic of a candid, thoughtful mind and of a heart deep in love with men and loyal to God. This does not imply that they were faultless, or that they are not open to just criticism, but rather that they are marked by intellectual and heart sincerity, a

quality always essential to popular esteem and impressiveness. The products of his pen must, therefore, have permanent value, not only in the archives of the Church, but in the hearts and lives of grateful thousands who have been blessed through the ministry of printed thought. These will have an undying interest in what he has written.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### BISHOP AND CHURCH LEADER.

THE twentieth General Conference met in York, Pa., May 9, 1889. Bishop Glossbrenner had died during the quadrennium. All the other bishops were present. For the sixth time James W. Hott was a delegate from Virginia Conference to this quadrennial gathering. His colleagues at this session were J. W. Howe, C. P. Dyche, and A. P. Funkhouser.

This was the first General Conference after the adoption of *pro rata* representation, and the largest that had ever assembled, being composed of 124 members besides the six bishops. It was an unusual Conference, chiefly because it was charged with the responsibility of acting upon the work of the Church Commission appointed four years before. The third day of the Conference this work came up for consideration, and, after being ably and earnestly discussed, it was approved by the decisive vote of 110 to 20.

Immediately following this action Dr. Hott offered a series of resolutions expressive of feelings of good will and brotherly love toward those voting in the minority. But this "olive branch" was declined by those to whom it referred, and no action was taken on the paper.

On the Monday following, May 13, the bishops officially proclaimed the Confession of Faith and Constitution as ratified by the General Conference, to be the fundamental belief and organic law of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

At this juncture a part of the dissenting minority

withdrew, and, going to a public hall, they organized another general conference and proceeded to transact business as if they were the representatives of the Church. This was the beginning of the withdrawal of a few thousand members from the Church and the organization of a new religious body. Though claiming for a time that they were the true Church, the courts decided otherwise, and they were compelled to relinquish all claim to the property of the Church.

With the approval of the work of the Commission there ended a long, and at times, acrimonious struggle to secure changes in the polity of the Church, which hitherto had been prevented by certain restrictive constitutional enactments. The part which the editor of the *Religious Telescope* had in bringing about this happy consummation was by no means insignificant. During the four years the Commission and its work were before the Church he directed the policy of the paper, true to the Church, with great skill and in admirable spirit. The quadrennium brought great changes in the sentiment of the Church, both in the ministry and laity, as was shown in the popular vote approving the work of the Commission.

Among other new measures that received the approval of this conference were those relating to lay representation in the General Conference, the admission of women to the ministry on the same terms as men, and the founding of the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*.

It was at the hands of this Conference that Dr. Hott received his first election to the bishop's office. Previous to the election it had been agreed that there should be four bishops elected to serve the districts lying east of the Rocky Mountains, and that a missionary bishop should be elected for the Pacific Coast, and to reside within the district, whose duties, in addition to holding the coast conferences, should include missionary

and evangelistic work. On the first ballot Bishops Weaver, Kephart, Castle, and Dickson were reëlected.

After the first ballot had been taken for the Coast bishop, in which Mr. Hott received a very complimentary vote, he arose and thanked the Conference for the confidence and appreciation expressed and asked that his name be not further used for that work. There was no election from the next ballot, and the morning session adjourned. In the afternoon, when a third ballot was ordered, Dr. Hott, addressing the presiding bishop, said: "I wish to do the most delicate thing of my life. I want to do it in the love of the Lord Jesus. This morning our brethren urged a form of work for me which I could not consent to take. After the second ballot has been cast by the brethren, and privately the matter has been urged upon my attention, I wish to recall the opposition which I made to your wishes. If you shall make such thought for me in the work of God, I shall then consent to go. I should be glad, however, if you would find another. I think you understand me. I pray that God may bless you." The ballot was then taken, and, despite the strong wish expressed, Dr. Hott was elected by a splendid vote. As he took his seat on the platform, at the invitation of Bishop Weaver, he was greeted with earnest applause.

It is not disclosing any secret when it is said that Bishop Hott much preferred to remain in the editorial work. He had no aspirations for anything higher than that field afforded, so it was with great reluctance that he gave his consent to accept another office, even one of higher dignity and honor.

There were good reasons for this reluctance. His long experience as an editor had given him a very high appreciation of the power of the religious press. He well knew that to direct the Church's thought and broadening life and activities through this agency meant far more than to be a bishop. This feeling was

not due to a mere selfish ambition to be great, but rather to his deep love for the Church and his desire to be of the greatest possible use in promoting its welfare. He was never a time-server, and could not be, but was a diplomat and statesman in aggressive churchcraft, always abreast of the spirit of the times, and a ready and capable leader in advance movements in Christian endeavor. But it was a man with these distinguishing qualities that was likewise demanded by the Church for its episcopal service.

In his final words as editor of our Church paper, after reviewing the period of his labors in that capacity, Dr. Hott evidences deep pain of heart when he says: "The writer regrets most of all to sever his relations with the readers of the *Religious Telescope*. He has learned to regard the preachers of the entire Church as his truest friends. He tried to gather the wants and toils and trials and sorrows and bereavements of the readers of the *Telescope* to his own heart, and so to be the better prepared to minister to their comfort and growth in the Christian life. This separation has in it that tenderness which a pastor feels when he parts from his long-watched and much-loved flock. May others lead this large company to pastures of tender grass and waters of quietness. We shall meet again on the banks of the river of life; there the flowers always bloom and the summer lasts forever."

To use the language of our Church historian, Dr. Berger, "That was a wise choice which the General Conference made when it added Dr. James W. Hott to the episcopal board. He was in the full vigor of early middle life, being in the forty-fifth year of his age, and had attained the ripe maturity of a strong intellectual manhood. He possessed the advantages gained through a broad and varied experience as preacher and editor, and by extensive travel in our own and foreign countries. To this he added a fervent de-

votion to the Church in which he was born, and to which he had hitherto given his life in unremitting service."

Bishop Hott left Dayton June 3, 1889, for his first visit to the new and distant diocese to which he had been assigned. In an account of his westward trip, entitled, "Drifting Toward a Distant Sea," the following is the opening paragraph: "The moorings are cut loose. The anchor is lifted. June 3, 1889, the frail bark is drifting toward a distant and unknown sea. Drifting! what a word this is! It must, in this case, mean, carried by the currents of providence and borne to a destiny unknown."

His first conference was at Walla Walla, which convened at Oakesdale, Washington, June 12. He was given a very cordial reception, his preaching and counsel being warmly commended. Writing of the conference, Bishop Castle, who was present, says: "Bishop Hott in his first visit won an easy captivity of the affections of this body of devoted ministers and people. He came with the gospel. That always wins in this conference."

At this conference steps were taken to establish a church in Spokane, a new town of 20,000 population, and rapidly growing. The bishop gave his earnest support to this forward movement, and later visited Spokane, where he found a "nucleus for a fine working church." Thus the quadrennium opened with this new enterprise well launched, a forerunner of numerous other like undertakings on the Coast.

The bishop's next conference was the Oregon, which met at Philomath, July 11. There he had a new and trying experience. He found that the majority of the preachers had gone off with the schism at the General Conference, and were claiming the church property in that State. They did not recognize him as the bishop, and were determined that he should not preside. The

conference was to be held in the chapel of Philomath College, the regular place of church worship in that place. The evening before the time set for the opening session the bishop received a notice forbidding him the use of the chapel. When he arrived the next day he found the door closed and guarded. As he was about to put his hand on the door-knob, one of the guards said, "You cannot enter here; this door is locked." Bishop Castle, whose home was then in Philomath, and who was a witness to this episode, says: "Then you ought to have seen a little Virginian, with all the stateliness of sterling manhood and the magistrature of a bishop, 'ride the whirlwind and direct the storm.' 'Brother, I 've come here to hold a conference, and I want you to stand from this door! You have no right here. The notice you served on me is of no force; it is not legal; it will not stand the test in any court in this country. I have rights in this country, and I am going to maintain them. I am going to hold a conference in this house. You are here without any authority, and you will regret the day of this assumption of power! Do you know what you are doing? I have legal advice in the matter from a reliable counsel in your own State.'"

Later the guards, when threatened with arrest, slunk away, and when leaving said, "If you go in, you do it at your own peril." "The bishop, responding to this," says Bishop Castle, "said, 'Come on, we 'll assume all responsibilities,' and thus led the way into the college chapel, where the conference was organized, and uninterruptedly conducted its business to a close."

The conference as organized was made up only of ministers loyal to the bishop and the Church. They passed strong resolutions of gratitude to the General Conference for sending to them in their time of trial Bishop J. W. Hott. His welcome was earnest and affectionate.



Following this conference the bishop wrote for the *Telescope*: "The work in Oregon is fairly started. The question as to whether we are to have a Church and conference here is settled. The element of resistance and ceaseless warring has gone from us. We can build in the future if we will, and God be with us to send salvation to the hearts of the people and bless his preached word. Five persons united with the Church last Sabbath night. God was with us all the time."

This seems like strange language when it is known that this was the thirty-sixth session of Oregon Conference; but the radicals were strong here, and they stubbornly resisted the authority of the General Conference. A long contest in the civil courts followed to quiet the title of the property of the Church in that State, of which there will be further reference later.

Bishop Hott now returned to Dayton to arrange for the removal of his family to Woodbridge, California, the place he had chosen for his episcopal residence for the ensuing four years. The *Telescope*, speaking of his return from the Coast, said, "His courage and tact in managing the affairs of the Church in Washington Territory and Oregon have been highly commendable, and have served to assure the Church that he is the man to take the superintendency of our important church interests on the Coast."

The next week the *Telescope* contained this personal note: "Bishop Hott occupied the pulpit of our Summit Street Church, this city, last Sabbath morning, preaching an excellent and appropriate sermon from the text, 'Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.' The bishop had been a member of this congregation, with his family, the past sixteen years; and as he was soon to remove to the Pacific Coast, the sermon partook of the nature of a farewell address to those with whom he had been so many years associated







BISHOP AND MRS. HOTT IN CALIFORNIA IN 1890.

as a neighbor and church-worker. He was greeted with a magnificent audience."

Two weeks later the bishop preached on Sunday morning for the First Church congregation, and in the afternoon addressed a men's meeting in the Y. M. C. A. hall. These meetings were largely attended, and were accompanied with earnest expressions of esteem and good will.

The bishop and his family were tendered a farewell reception at Summit Street Church on the Monday evening prior to their departure. Fitting addresses were made by Dr. W. J. Shuey, Bishop Weaver, Dr. G. A. Funkhouser, and others, to which the bishop made a happy and impressive response. Mrs. Hott received a fine silver plate and the bishop a beautiful gold-headed cane, gifts from their Sunday-school classes. These testimonials were the grateful expression of love from those who had long enjoyed their faithful services as teachers.

With this warm-hearted good-by in Dayton, the long journey to Woodbridge, California, was taken, where they found a royal greeting and welcome awaiting them. Woodbridge is a beautiful village, thirty-five miles south of Sacramento, and was at that time the seat of San Joaquin Valley College, a school of the Church. There the bishop and family found a delightful home amid congenial surroundings and associations.

Soon after reaching his new home the bishop was unexpectedly summoned to Oregon to look after the Church litigation pending there. The trip of seven hundred miles, made by rail over the famous "Shasta Route," was quite in contrast with making the journey by stage, as Bishop Weaver and others had done in visiting our work on the Coast some years before.

The litigation in Oregon was forced on the Church by those who had withdrawn from it; but under the

wise and tactful leadership favorable decisions were at last reached. The courts were slow in coming to a perfect understanding of the case, and early decisions were adverse to the Church, but finally in the court of highest resort a decision was handed down fully vindicating all the claims of the Church as to its identity and property rights.

California Conference met in Sacramento, October 9. The session was harmonious and attended with an excellent devotional spirit. This conference lost only a few members by the radical withdrawal, and they were nearly all local and superannuated preachers. Bishop Hott was accorded the warmest possible welcome, and the conference found in him a brother indeed, who entered into their life and work with a zeal and heartiness which made his presence an inspiration and benediction. He was delighted to meet there the Rev. D. Shuck, formerly a bishop in the Church, and who organized the conference twenty-five years before, and the Revs. T. J. Bauder and J. L. Field, also veterans there. The Rev. W. C. Day, D. D., a former pastor of the bishop, was the secretary of the conference. The city press gave the conference cordial recognition, and the bishop's preaching was spoken of in terms of highest appreciation.

The three conferences now mentioned comprised the entire district over which Bishop Hott had the superintendence. The holding of the annual sessions of these bodies was really a small part of his work. "The care of all the churches," in the midst of the trying conditions in the Church life, the opening of new missions in promising centers, aiding pastors in evangelistic work, and the dedication of churches, involved arduous and continued toil. He saw the field to be large and urgent, and he deeply felt that the Church had a commission to occupy it. To this end his splendid powers of brain and soul were unstintedly devoted.

In giving a report of the district for the year, the bishop said: "Our work on this coast is scattered over a vast territory, and this, with many other things, renders it difficult to supply and organize it well. The field is a difficult, needy, and yet a hopeful one. There is no part of our great country where the conditions of the present and the promises of the future demand so much and so earnestly of the Church. The foundations of what might well be called an empire are now being laid west of the Rocky Mountains." And this he makes the occasion of an earnest appeal for the hearty support of the work on the Coast by the entire denomination.

During the following winter Bishop Hott visited the churches in southern California. He spent two weeks with the Rev. M. S. Bovey at Riverside in fruitful revival work. Seventeen were hopefully converted, and the church was much strengthened in its life. He did a like work at other points, much to the encouragement of pastors and people. "What a welcome they gave me, all for the Master's sake," was one of the bishop's earnest expressions as he afterwards told of how he was received by the churches.

In the early spring of 1890, a general Young People's Convention having been called to meet in Dayton, Ohio, June 4 and 5, Bishop Hott wrote the committee issuing the call: "We must keep our young people churchly in their organization. We are shut up to it by the law of self-preservation. I presume the way to do is to organize as you propose to do, and that with a view of carrying the matter to the annual conferences. I do believe the organization of our young people in all the churches of our Zion would be a great stimulus to the Church and Christian work."

This convention was held, the Young People's Christian Union was organized, and a unique plan was adopted for the denominational control of all the

young people's societies of the Church. Being in deep sympathy with the young, this movement at once enlisted the bishop's most sympathetic coöperation.

In June Bishop Hott started on a new round of his conferences. His first was the Oregon, held at Philomath, beginning June 11. Here he received the sad news of the death of a cherished brother, the Rev. C. M. Hott, the new pastor at Woodbridge. This brother had gone to the Coast from Boonsboro, Maryland, where he had lived eight years, two as presiding elder and six as a faithful and loved pastor, the December previous, at the solicitation of the bishop, that he might help in the great work of that needy field. He was just beginning what promised to be a pastorate of unusual vigor and fruitfulness, when suddenly he was cut down. He died June 15. The sorrow which this event occasioned his brother was unspeakable, and besides, a wide circle of friends was stirred, for the deceased was a man of noble character, an able preacher, and had been in the ministry for twenty-two years.

Because of this sorrowful visitation the bishop was not able to attend Walla Walla conference that year, and the Rev. W. S. Gilbert, then president of Philomath College, was asked to do that work, which he did with great acceptability.

That summer Bishop Hott attended the California State Sunday-School Convention, and was a favorite speaker on the program. Dr. E. S. Chapman, in writing the *Telescope* of his work, says: "We piled the work upon him in preparing the program, and the more we gave him to do the better he did it. The many puns played on his suggestive name were soon forgotten in the intensity of the enthusiasm and interest which he kindled in the hearts of all who were present. He made an impression on the Christian workers of the State which has been and will continue to be helpful to the Church which he represents on our Coast."

The San Francisco *Christian Advocate*, speaking of the bishop's addresses on "Modern Customs in Bible Lands," said: "He showed how much illumination many of the words of Scripture receive by the study of the customs which prevail to-day in those lands. Dr. Hott is a true brother in Christ, and his presence was very much enjoyed by the convention."

The bishop supplied the pulpit of the Woodbridge church three months, completing the conference year of his brother. During this time he had the joy of welcoming to the fellowship of the Church sixteen new members.

The California Conference was held at Selma, convening October 8. The next week the bishop went to Oregon. After spending a few days in Philomath in special meetings, attended with marked spiritual results, he visited and preached in other parts of the State and in Washington, dedicated the new church in Spokane, November 9, a beautiful house of worship, which, with the parsonage, cost \$6,600. The success of this enterprise was realized under the leadership of the Rev. C. C. Bell, who had been the pastor there from the beginning. Writing of this event, the bishop said: "This we count one of the grandest achievements of our Church anywhere." The children of the Church, through the letter-box of the *Telescope*, contributed over \$700 to the funds for this praiseworthy mission enterprise.

In his second annual report of his district, in February, 1891, Bishop Hott, after referring to the feeling of depression caused by the division in the Church on the Coast, said: "The struggle is not ended, but we have passed the most trying ordeal and are better organized for aggressive work for Christ and humanity than before. The promise for the future is for the most part encouraging."

On the 7th of February the bishop turned his steps



toward southern California again. At Selma he stopped and preached eight days in special meetings. One of the converts was a grandson of the bishop's first Sunday-school teacher. This, and like incidents were to him sources of joy and inspiration. While on this trip he was again summoned to Oregon to testify in the Church case having a hearing there. A few days later he was called back to Woodbridge by a telegram announcing the serious illness of Dr. J. J. Riley, the physician who had given him such skillful and patient care after his accident in the Yosemite Valley, four years before. He was able to reach Woodbridge just in time to officiate at the funeral of his devoted friend.

These movements of the bishop show how very active his life was during his term of church service on the Coast. The long distances which he had to travel but added to his laborious duties.

As the first anniversary of the Young People's Christian Union drew near, the officers of the organization felt it would be wise to open a home mission somewhere to be supported by the young people of the Church. After consultation with Bishop Hott it was decided to observe May 31, 1891, as Young People's Day in the Church, and that offerings be taken on that day for a new mission church to be planted in Los Angeles, California. Learning of this action, the bishop wrote: "I am rejoiced to see you open up for Los Angeles. God is in that plan, I am sure. How often I have prayed for some such opening there. The Young People's Christian Union will put a star of the first magnitude in its constellation of many stars by this opening up of the work in that beautiful city of southern California."

This movement for a church there was wisely guided by the bishop through several interesting stages—first the purchase of a lot on the corner of Pico and Hope streets for \$2,750, then the building of a chapel cost-

ing \$1,000, and later a beautiful modern church at a cost of \$10,000.

Bishop Hott that year attended the annual meetings of the several Church boards held in May, in Dayton, Ohio. Here he received a very warm greeting after two years' absence and work on the coast. The Missionary Board approved the work undertaken in Los Angeles, and appointed the Rev. E. A. Starkey to be the first pastor and missionary in that city, and it was he who laid the foundations there for the present flourishing church, though the church-house was built under the pastorate of the Rev. J. S. Pitman.

Returning to the Coast soon after the May anniversaries, Bishop Hott resumed his work with renewed zeal and hopefulness. For two years more his toils for the Church and the cause of Christ were abundant and fruitful. He preached, lectured, and traveled almost constantly. According to the record of his work which he kept, he preached seventy-six times for the church in Woodbridge during his four years' residence there. He so delighted to preach the gospel that he rarely ever declined an invitation to do so.

Under his aggressive supervision and untiring labors the Church on his district had great prosperity. He had been able to enlist a number of strong men from the East to join in the work there. Among these were the Rev. W. S. Gilbert, who became president of the college at Philomath, Oregon, in 1889, and the Rev. J. G. Huber, who became president of San Joaquin Valley College, at Woodbridge, California, in 1891, both from Miami Conference. The latter succeeded the Rev. D. A. Mobley, who had for years been at the head of the educational work of the Church in that State.

New churches were established at Spokane, Washington; Julieta, Idaho; Hood River, Eugene, and Portland, Oregon; and in Los Angeles and other places in

California. To all these enterprises the bishop gave the heartiest personal support.

In the spring of 1892 Dr. W. J. Shuey, the Publishing Agent at Dayton, paid a visit to the Coast, and attended the Walla Walla and Oregon conferences, giving great encouragement to the bishop and the work there. He also visited the bishop at his home at Woodbridge, and there preached the baccalaureate at the commencement of the college. While there the home of the bishop was the scene of an event of very delightful interest. It was the marriage of the bishop's two daughters, June 2, the ceremony being performed by himself, assisted by Dr. Shuey. Lou Ella was married to Professor J. H. Francis, and Mattie to President J. G. Huber, both members of the faculty of the college.

There are many incidents of the work during the two following years, of the bishop's preaching for our own and other churches, of his lecturing, and writing extensively for the Church papers, etc., which would have interest, but space is wanting. We have now had a somewhat comprehensive view of Bishop Hott's work during his first term in the episcopal office, and we must now turn to other scenes and labors.

The twenty-first General Conference convened in Dayton, Ohio, May 11, 1893. The bishops, Weaver, Dickson, Castle, Kephart, and Hott were all present. The past quadrennial term had witnessed the signal triumph of the Church in the litigation resulting from the division caused four years before, and the Conference gathered under very assuring and hopeful auspices. Laymen, among whom were two women delegates, had seats in this body for the first time. The bishops' address, which was read by Bishop Hott, and had been prepared by him, was a very comprehensive and able church paper, some of its ringing utterances calling forth enthusiastic applause. Its key-note was

"aggressiveness." Referring to the address in his response to the address of welcome to the conference, President Beardshear called it the "grandest address which the noble bishops of this Church ever gave to us in our history"

Among the closing paragraphs of the address, under the heading, "A Word of Counsel," is this strikingly clear analysis of the Church's chief mission: "In our work of evangelization three great interests demand supreme consideration. Three demands rise colossus-like before you. The first is for a trained, thoroughly equipped, consecrated ministry; the second is for a missionary treasury filled with the Lord's money, for use in the Lord's cause; the third is a strong Church-Erection Society, mightily equipped for aiding in building churches in 'our great, growing, and wicked towns and cities. These are the trinity of our Church's needs. Give us these and the Church will dig out the very foundation and corner-stone of the kingdom of darkness."

The bishop's commanding skill and foresight as a church leader were never more markedly conspicuous than in this now historic paper.

On the eighth day of its session the General Conference elected the bishops for the coming four years, choosing Jonathan Weaver (bishop *emeritus*), N. Castle, E. B. Kephart, J. W. Hott, and G. A. Funkhouser. Dr. Funkhouser declining the office later in the session, J. S. Mills, of Iowa Conference, was elected in his place.

The General Conference adopted the rotary plan for attending the conferences by the bishops, but decided that they should arrange to reside as follows: one bishop east of the Allegheny Mountains, one between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River, one between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, and one on the Pacific Coast. In harmony

with this action the episcopal residences for the quadrennium were as follows: Bishop Kephart, Baltimore, Maryland; Bishop Castle, Elkhart, Indiana; Bishop Hott, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Bishop Mills, Eugene, Oregon. Bishop Weaver, now holding an *emeritus* relation because of his age and feebleness, continued to reside in Dayton, Ohio.

In the autumn of 1893 Bishop Hott held the following conferences: Lower Wabash, Central Illinois, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Northwest Kansas, Neosho, and Des Moines, and in the spring of 1894 he presided at the Southern Missouri, Arkansas Valley, Southwest Kansas, and East Nebraska. The same purposeful earnestness that had distinguished him in his Coast work was now displayed in his new field. He was everywhere warmly received, and his fresh, versatile preaching, plain and practical addresses to licentiates, and his wakeful leadership, won for him the confidence and esteem of ministers and people.

The semiannual meeting of the Board of Bishops was held in Johnstown, Pa., November 28, 1893. At this time Bishop Hott was asked to visit the missions and churches in Africa and Germany in the fall of 1894, and the conference calendar for the next year was arranged accordingly.

In connection with this meeting the bishops called a "Church Council," to consider ways and means for the successful carrying forward of the work of the Church especially planned for by the last General Conference. To this council were invited the general officers of the Church, the leading educators, and others interested in the progress of the denomination, ministers and laymen. This meeting, though not large, was quite representative. Many questions came up for consideration, but that which received chief emphasis was the educational work. It was resolved to encourage efforts to relieve our institutions of learning, the Seminary

and colleges, from their burdensome debts, during the quadrennium. The bishops were asked to prepare an address to the Church to this end, which they did.

In keeping with the recommendation of the Johnstown meeting, several of the colleges called councils to consider their interests. Bishop Hott was present at meetings of this character where aggressive measures were adopted for the relief of Lane University, and Western and York colleges, institutions on his district. A similar meeting at Otterbein University, presided over by Bishop Castle, resulted within a few months in raising \$86,000, which gave that institution substantial relief.

After holding his conferences in the spring of 1894, Bishop Hott visited the churches in Texas, preaching and encouraging the struggling workers there.

He with all the other bishops of the Church attended the commencement of Union Biblical Seminary early in May, and later in the month the meetings of the Missionary and Church-Erection boards in Fostoria, Ohio, giving vigilant attention to the interests represented by these institutions.

Beginning June 8, Bishop Hott conducted a summer school of divinity of four weeks at Lecompton, Kansas. This was attended by ministers of Kansas and Missouri, and was designed especially to be helpful to young men pursuing the course of study in the conferences. The school was attended with very gratifying interest and results. Each summer during the quadrennium a like school was held, the bishop's teaching, lectures, and preaching giving great satisfaction. In this kind of work he was ready and practical, and never failed to be a favorite leader.

Beginning with the Tennessee, August 23, Bishop Hott held conferences as follows: Erie, East Ohio, Parkersburg, Allegheny, East German, East Pennsylvania. At the latter conference he received a hand-



somely mounted cane, made of wood from the floor of the historic Isaac Long Barn, of near Lancaster, Pa., in which Otterbein and Boehm first met in a great meeting, and where Otterbein, after hearing Boehm preach, embraced him, saying, "We are brethren." The cane was the gift of Mr. D. D. Good, a warm personal friend of the bishop. The memento was much appreciated because of its historic associations.

Tuesday evening, November 13, a very impressive meeting was held in the college chapel, at Westerville, Ohio, when five missionaries, the Rev. J. R. King and wife, the Rev. A. T. Howard and wife, and Miss Minnie Eaton, were formally consecrated to the work in Africa. The address of the occasion was delivered by Bishop Hott, who was to accompany these new recruits to their chosen field, from Acts 13:2, 3. In the *Telescope's* report of his effort it was said, "He was at his best, and held the audience spellbound for three-quarters of an hour." President T. J. Sanders, Dr. W. M. Bell, Dr. G. A. Funkhouser, and Mrs. L. K. Miller participated in the touching ceremonies.

Wednesday, November 28, Bishop Hott and wife, the five missionaries named above, and Miss Florence M. Cronise, who had been previously set apart in consecration for African mission service, sailed from New York. After a safe voyage of eight days the party landed at Liverpool. From there, writing of the voyage, the bishop said: "Most of the company have been miserably sick. The ladies and myself have fared the worst. Mrs. King soon got over it, and has done well. Mrs. Howard, Miss Cronise, and Miss Eaton have been sick most all the time. Brother King was ill for a day or two, and since has been courageous, while Mr. Howard has not missed a meal, I am told. I have been abed and from meals about half the time. Sympathy devoted to Mrs. Hott has been worse than wasted, for **she has not missed a meal, and has, indeed, thus far,**



proved the best sailor of the company. God has been good to us, and our hearts cry out always to him from the solitude and wonder of the mighty waters."

After a day spent in Liverpool, passage was taken on the steamer *Cabenda* for Freetown, where all arrived in good health, Saturday night, December 22, on the twenty-fifth day out from New York. The next day they were met on their vessel by missionaries L. O. Burtner and wife, I. N. Cain, Mrs. West, Dr. Hatfield, and the Misses Thomas and Schenck. This was a happy meeting to all.

Writing the next day in a private letter to the editor of the *Telescope*, the bishop said: "My heart is filled with many emotions, and my mind with many thoughts I cannot express. It opens to one's view another world, to come here."

Two small boats, rowed by native boatmen, carried the missionaries, new and old, to their desired destination; the bishop and wife and those in the employ of the Parent Board, to Shengeh, and those of the Woman's Board, to Rotifunk.

The first Sunday in Shengeh Bishop Hott preached in Flickinger Chapel, from Rom. 1:11, "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that ye may be established." About one hundred and fifty people were present, and the place and the new and strange relations all united to make the occasion deeply impressive to every one. In the evening a reception was given the bishop and the missionaries. Several welcome addresses were made by natives, and one on behalf of the missionaries, by Mr. Burtner. The hearty greetings were happily responded to by the bishop and others. This reception was in itself a splendid tribute to the character and fruits of the missionary work done at this station.

The next Wednesday a tour of visitation of the several mission stations occupied by the Church was be-

gun by the bishop, accompanied by Messrs. Burtner, Howard, and King. At Danville they were the guests of the Rev. D. F. Wilberforce, who was educated in Dayton, and well known to the bishop, a man of great influence in that country. Mr. Wilberforce and wife gave them royal entertainment after the "American fashion." At Bonthe the station was in charge of the Rev. J. A. Evans, also an old friend of the bishop and a member of Virginia Conference. Mr. Evans had then seen many years in missionary service in Africa, and the meeting there was one of mutual delight. At these, and other places visited the bishop preached to attentive native audiences, and otherwise, by counsel and cheer, gave encouragement to the work and the workers.

The Sherbro Conference convened in Shengeh, January 15, and was presided over by the visiting bishop. Mr. King, in reporting the conference, says, "Bishop Hott exhibited his characteristic force and spirituality in the opening, which were well maintained all through the conference." One evening, after a sermon by a native preacher, the bishop conducted an altar service, of which Mr. King says, "The fervency of the prayers of the penitents and of their praising God would have been an inspiration to the gloomiest pessimist on the subject of missions."

The conference closed on Sunday. It was a red-letter day. Fourteen children were presented for baptism by their parents or guardians. The bishop touched every heart in the sermon that followed the baptismal service.

At the conference Bishop Hott met not only the missionaries of both the boards of the Church, but many native workers and others, fruits of the years of faithful seed-sowing in that needy land. His presence and counsel gave great encouragement to the soldiers who hold these outposts of the King's army. They felt that his visit was of great value to the work in Africa, and

that it would have a like value to the Church at home, in giving added interest in missions, which it surely did.

The interests of the Woman's Missionary Association in Africa received the same earnest oversight from the bishop as those of the General Board. He visited their stations and schools, being shown marked honors everywhere. At Bompeh, where the women have a prosperous station, and where a Sabbath was spent, he dedicated a church, wholly built by the natives.

But the time had come, all too soon, when this tour and sojourn in this dark land must close. Six weeks had been spent here, and the bishop had preached eighteen times, lectured twice, and given twenty or more impromptu addresses, besides traveling extensively and investigating the conditions and needs of the work. What were now his impressions? While regarding the black wall of heathenism as appalling, yet now from the standpoint of his own study and observation, he felt that missionary work was making steady progress here. He considered the training-school for the education of native workers one of the most promising features of the work.

After final consultation with some of the missionaries who had accompanied them, at Freetown, and planning for a house of rest on Mount Leicester, near that city, for the use of missionaries when sick or needing rest, Bishop and Mrs. Hott took their departure February 6. They reached Liverpool on the 21st, and went at once to London, where a most enjoyable Sabbath was passed, hearing Joseph Parker preach in City Temple in the morning, one of the canons of the Episcopal Church in Westminster Abbey in the afternoon, and the Bishop of Marlborough in St. Paul's Cathedral, the largest and most magnificent Protestant church in the world, in the evening. It was a day of long-cherished privileges and delights.

The following week, the bishop, accompanied by his wife, went directly to that part of Germany where the United Brethren Church has had successful missions for many years. He spent two weeks there, holding the German Conference and making a tour of the principal missions and churches and making a careful study of the work. The bishop preached at a number of places, the Rev. H. Barkemeyer, the presiding elder, acting as interpreter. Though he had studied German some, he was not able to use it in preaching. In writing of a very interesting service in Galnow he breaks forth with this lament, "Oh, that I were a Dutchman, full-fledged, for a month, just to preach to them in their own language!"

At Falkenstein he was announced to preach March 10, but by an order from the mayor of the city, he was forbidden to do so. It was believed that the order was inspired by the preachers of the state church. This was a new experience. He had preached in many lands, and this was the first time he was ever forbidden to preach the gospel, and that in Christian Germany!

The bishop's visit to the Fatherland was helpful to preachers and people who have been gathered into the Church there. He found them deeply spiritual in their religious life, but having a great struggle for existence, largely due to the bitter opposition of the state church. But this only intensified his desire that they might be blessed with a larger freedom in spiritual worship.

This mission of oversight and encouragement being finished, the bishop turned his steps homeward, he and Mrs. Hott reaching New York in safety and good health April 1. Speaking of these months of absence in Africa and Germany, the *Telescope* said on their return: "The bishop's letters which we have published have had very great interest, and have stimulated a deeper feeling of churchly interest in the missions to which he made this episcopal tour of visitation."

As indicating the intense laborious life which Bishop Hott again resumed on his return, it may be noted that Easter Sunday was spent in New York City, where he preached in the Presbyterian Church of the Good Shepherd. Then, after preaching in other places, visiting his mother in Virginia, he lectured in Columbus, Ohio, the evening of April 23, and the next day delivered the Founders' Day address at Otterbein University. Sunday, May 5, while attending the Seminary anniversaries, he gave an able address on "The Young People's Society in the Life of the Church," in connection with the annual meeting of the Executive Council of the Young People's Christian Union.

At the meeting of the Board of Missions a few days later, at Fort Wayne, Indiana, he gave a very full and encouraging report of his visit to Africa and Germany, presenting in a very graphic manner the conditions and needs in those mission fields, from the standpoint of his own observation and study. It was at this time that the sanitarium at Mount Leicester was authorized, a project he earnestly advised and encouraged. To the furthering of this enterprise he gave persistent attention during several months that followed, in connection with other duties. So great was his conviction that sick and wearied missionaries should have this place for rest and recuperation, he was unwearied in his appeals on its behalf, both in the Church periodicals and in the conferences, till it was a happy realization. By his own personal efforts considerable sums were secured for this good work.

This Fort Wayne meeting of the Board was one of the most aggressive in spirit and plans in its history. Steps were taken to strengthen and enlarge the missions already established, to plant a new mission in Japan, and to extend the work in our own southland. The meeting closed with an able and thrilling sermon by Bishop Hott on "The Preaching of the Gospel."

A busy summer followed, in which the bishop preached and lectured at various summer assemblies, and then came to his autumn tour of conferences, which opened with White River, at Lapel, Indiana, August 28. He had not presided over these conferences before. Everywhere he was received with the utmost cordiality. This tour closed with the West Nebraska Conference, the last of October.

Of a visit made to York College, President Reese said: "We appreciated the bishop's visit here. His excellent lectures and inspiring preaching were a rich treat to our people."

About the middle of December Bishop and Mrs. Hott started for California to visit a daughter at Stockton. Though one object of this trip was to secure needed rest, the bishop preached often on the Coast in our own and other churches. He dedicated a church at Durham, California, January 26, 1896, for the Rev. F. Fisher, and February 9 he had the great joy of dedicating the beautiful new church at Los Angeles, which he had helped to plant and nourish in its beginnings. The completion of this elegant modern house of worship, at a cost of \$10,000, was a splendid tribute to the zeal and courage of the Rev. J. S. Pitman, the pastor, and his loyal people. It will be remembered that to this enterprise the young people of the Church contributed about \$5,000. The success of this work was in large part due to his wise planning and efforts when the Coast bishop, and was a splendid victory for the Church in southern California.

Returning east, Bishop Hott held Colorado Conference, beginning March 12, and East Nebraska and Iowa conferences the two weeks following. Though residing within the bounds of the latter conference, this was the first time he presided over one of its annual sessions. His courtesy, ability, and fairness made for him warm and lasting friends.



The annual sermon at the commencement of Union Biblical Seminary, in May, was preached by Bishop Hott from John 20:18, "I have seen the Lord," the theme being, "The Supreme Spiritual Vision." The sermon was strong, practical, and timely, and was only another illustration of his remarkable versatility and readiness in adapting himself to special occasions.

After attending the meetings of the Missionary and Church-Erection boards at Alexis, Illinois, and participating in their deliberations with his accustomed heartiness, he met important engagements in many different places, at Lane University, Leocompton, Kansas, receiving the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, and then attended the general Young People's Convention of the Church, which met at Des Moines, Iowa, June 21. Here he gave the closing address on "Young People and Evangelism," a magnificent parting message to the delegates on the conditions and joys of soul-winning.

Writing of this gathering for the *Watchword*, the bishop said: "It was a great convention for the young, for ideas, methods, exercises, fellowship, hope, enthusiasm, enlargement, education, aggressiveness, consecration, all peculiarly fitted for the young heart and life. . . . The convention exalted great themes. No little and mean issues gained prominence."

The International Christian Endeavor Convention met in Washington, D. C., July 9. Bishop Hott was there representing the United Brethren Church, and having an important place on the program of that great meeting. The theme of his address was, "Personal Responsibility in Soul-Winning." The *Washington Star* spoke highly of the address and published a generous synopsis of it, together with a good portrait cut of the bishop.

A new circuit of conferences began with Miami, at Lewisburg, Ohio, September 2. At none of these had



he previously presided. Under his guidance business and religion were happily commingled and these gatherings were real seasons of spiritual and churchly uplift. Writing for the *Telescope* of October 28, of the six Ohio conferences, the bishop said: "The most thorough Christian courtesy, and brotherly fellowship, and churchly sympathy and regard were shown by all the conferences to myself and to all the general officers of the Church."

In the spring of 1897 he held Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia conferences, completing his second quadrennial term in the general superintendency of the Church. Under the plans for episcopal supervision he had now visited all parts of the Church, being self-sacrificing and abundant in labors. That his intense activity and churchly devotion and enterprise should have awakened some opposition to his administration of affairs in certain cases, and that this would follow him to the next General Conference, was to be expected. It was the opposition which great men, aggressive leaders, men who do something, always have to meet. To this, however, he gave no heed, though conscious of it, but maintained with unwavering fidelity his relations to all his brethren, especially to those in the general service of the Church, and to all the interests of the denomination he loved so well. His high-minded purpose and zeal, with his broad charity, so characteristic of his whole life, were not disturbed by these things. His manly and Christian equipoise under all circumstances was not only a leading trait of his character, but an element of strength and worth of incalculable service under varied conditions and requirements.

The twenty-second General Conference convened in Toledo, Iowa, May 13, 1897. All the bishops were present and one hundred and ninety-one other delegates, lay and clerical, making this the largest and most rep-

representative meeting of the kind that had ever assembled in the history of the Church. The past quadrennium had been one of general prosperity and growth. The increase in the membership of the Church was about 36,000 for the four years. The triumphant success of the litigation forced upon the Church by the seceders following the 1889 conference, was the occasion of special rejoicing and hope. Though the legal struggle was not yet over, it was felt the end was near. The legislation of the session was generally wise and progressive. Among the measures looking to the increased efficiency of the Church were the putting of increased emphasis on a higher standard of qualification for the ministry, providing for the employment of deaconesses, and the stationing of the bishops, each on a district for the entire quadrennium.

Bishop Hott was elected for the third time one of the general superintendents of the Church, though the vote showed the result of evident opposition. While this was a source of unspeakable humiliation and grief to one of his sensitive make-up, his feelings never found expression in any public act or word. His serenity and nobleness of character were notably preserved, and he gave himself with renewed zeal and efficiency to the cause of his Master and his Church.

The other bishops were all reëlected, and the assignments for the ensuing four years were made as follows: The Ohio District, Bishop Hott; East District, Bishop Kephart; Central District, Bishop Castle; West District, Bishop Mills.

Bishop Hott chose Dayton, Ohio, as his episcopal residence. Thus he had his home where he had formerly lived and where he had many and devoted friends. Soon after the General Conference he began to plan for his coming conferences, and to arrange to make their sessions seasons for the deepening of the spiritual life of ministers and people, as well as for

the usual business. He prepared Bible readings on vital and practical themes, which he gave at the opening of the daily sessions.

This is the spirit with which a new quadrennium was entered, and this only broadened and deepened with the passing of the years, making this preëminently the crowning period of his active and useful life.

In 1899 a conference of ministers and Christian workers for Bible study for the deepening of the spiritual life was held May 2 to 7, under the auspices of Union Biblical Seminary and the pastors of the United Brethren churches of Dayton, Ohio. Bishop Hott was the president of the association arranging for this conference, and worked assiduously for its success. He was especially solicitous that the pastors of churches on his district should attend the conference and share its blessings. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, recognized as one of the spiritual leaders of the world, conducted the conference. It was largely attended by ministers from many States, who testified to its great helpfulness. The bishop assisted in planning and holding similar meetings at the close of the Seminary year the two following years, with like good results.

In his management of his conferences, and in the versatility of his methods of study and work, Bishop Hott showed a wonderful facility in getting out of the beaten paths. This was true of him also as a preacher, writer, and thinker.

The conferences of his district were held without special or unpleasant incidents during the quadrennium, the bishop's associations with the members being of the most pleasant character. His oversight of the work and his administration of the discipline of the Church were marked by wisdom and prudence. His intellectual endowments, scholarly attainments, and unusual preaching ability, and that wide outlook upon the world which comes from large experience in

dealing with men, together with his ethical integrity and physical energy, comprised a remarkable catalogue of qualifications for the office of a Christian bishop. It was the possession of these elements of strength that enabled him to endure so well the incessant drafts on his vital energies through so many laborious years. There was never any question of the wisdom of the Church in its laying its hands upon James W. Hott and investing him with the functions of so exalted and trying a position.

This quadrennium, however, while furnishing him unequalled opportunities for wide and effective service to the Church, was destined to bring to him the most crushing sorrow of his life, in the long and painful illness of Mrs. Hott, which terminated in her death August 7, 1899. For two years she was the one object of her devoted husband's tender watchfulness and care. Through all her helpless and weary sufferings she maintained a beautiful calmness and resignation which greatly impressed her friends. This disposition was in sweet accord with her cheerful and even-tempered Christian life. She had been the faithful and affectionate wife of a minister of the gospel for thirty-five years, being his ready support and most trusted counselor in all the responsible duties to which the Church had called him. She was a true minister's companion, always sympathetic and helpful in coöperation. Her life closed with the beautiful radiance all about her of the day which had preceded, triumphant and peaceful.

The funeral service was held in the bishop's Williams Street home, Dayton, Ohio, August 9. The pastor, the Rev. C. W. Kurtz, read the Scripture lesson, Dr. H. H. Fout offered prayer, and Dr. G. M. Mathews, a former pastor, read a biographical sketch of the life of Mrs. Hott. Dr. W. J. Shuey and Bishop Weaver

made tender and comforting addresses. The interment took place in Woodland Cemetery.

Bishop Hott had the profound sympathy of the Church in this great bereavement, but he found his chief comfort in his work, to which he continued to devote himself with unfaltering zeal and courage. His spirit and life seemed only to have been sweetened and enriched by the deep shadows through which he had passed. With the discipline which the experiences of sorrow brought him, there came only clearer visions of life, present and future, and he gave himself with a new fidelity and earnestness to the one work to which he was consecrated. All the resourcefulness of his being he poured into that. No sacrifice or labor was too great that he might preach Christ and lead the Church to a loftier and holier sense of the dignity and responsibility of its divine mission.

It was in this spirit, warm and strong in heart, radiant in his love for Christ and passionate in his love for souls, though wearied in body and brain, that Bishop James W. Hott came to the close of the third quadrennial term of his episcopal service.

## CHAPTER IX.

### LAST GENERAL CONFERENCE, SICKNESS, AND DEATH.

THE twenty-third General Conference was held in Frederick City, Maryland, May 9 to 21, 1901. All the bishops were present except Bishop Weaver, who had died during the quadrennium.

This Conference was made memorable as marking the centennial anniversary of the formal organization of the Church. Then, it was held on historic ground, amid the scenes of the early labors of the fathers of the Church, Otterbein, Boehm, and others. The house in which the first conference was held in 1800, known in the history of the Church as the Peter Kemp home, still in a good state of preservation, is only two miles from Frederick, and to it the members of the conference paid a visit on Monday, May 13, and there held impressive memorial services, led by Bishop Mills. The next day a pilgrimage was made to Baltimore to the church and tomb of Otterbein, the human founder of the denomination, where fitting addresses and other exercises in memory of the character and work of William Otterbein were held, participated in by the bishops and others.

At the next regular session of the General Conference, Bishop Hott, the presiding officer, said: "It is probable that no General Conference in the history of our beloved Church has ever assembled with such memories lying back of it as those carried by us to this morning's session from yesterday and the day before. Since our last business session we visited the scenes of the first conference, held one hundred years

ago by the fathers at the home of Peter Kemp, and yesterday we mingled in holy fellowship and service within the walls where Otterbein, the founder of our beloved Zion, ministered the word of God for so many years, and stood by the tomb where his dust rests in peace. We come up to this morning's session filled, I doubt not, with such hopes for our Zion, and such hopes for the kingdom of God, as have not before rested upon us, and with such purposes of holy consecration of our lives and of our powers and of our services, to the great end sought by our fathers, as have not before entered into the experience of our lives."

The historic features of this Conference were further signalized in a series of centennial addresses delivered during the Conference, and which have since been published in a volume of over two hundred pages. One of these centenary addresses was delivered by Bishop Hott. His theme, one in which he found rare delight, was "The Heroism of the Fathers." It was the earnest tribute of a grateful and loyal son to the memory of the fathers, who laid so wisely and well the foundations of the Church. It abounded in graphic and eloquent allusions to the first conference, and the "plain men, stalwart sons of nature, mighty in holy deeds," that composed it. Otterbein and Boehm and Newcomer were there, the two first named being elected bishops, and others with "great minds and loyal hearts."

Speaking of the difficulties the fathers encountered, Bishop Hott said, in part: "I wish I could experience for one hour the emotions of Bishop Otterbein as he rode through this city out to Peter Kemp's to the conference of 1800. I wish that my soul might thrill with the sensations that stirred his great nature as he opened that conference with prayer and exhortation. What would we not give to have live in us for one hour the feelings of Bishop Newcomer as he knelt on the sum-



mit of the Allegheny Mountains beside the stone altar he had reared, and, Jacob-like, saw the angels of God going up and coming down before him, then reverently rose and took his lonely way to the opening fields of God in Ohio? What a figure he was as he knelt alone on the banks of a swollen stream in central Ohio and thanked God with all his soul for delivering him safely across! Behind the fathers were spiritual power and God; before them, wilderness and hope. It is a manly man that walks undaunted in the darkness. Our fathers walked and worked in the shadows, shadows of the early morning; fixed their eyes on the Cross and the coming day, and made a Church for themselves and their little ones."

This thrilling and characteristic address closed with a reference to the spirit of consecration which belonged to the fathers of the Church. "The fathers were not inspired by ecclesiastical ambitions. There is an enthusiasm kindled by church pride. It was not known to them. . . . No earthly emoluments allured them. They asked no marble shaft for their last resting-place. They gave themselves not expecting to receive gains. They gave the world a Church made sacred to us by their prayers and tears and sacrificing toils. Were I permitted, I should like here and now to call the long roll of names of these illustrious men of God."

Little did the bishop think, when paying these just encomiums to the fathers, so strong and heroic, that he so soon would be gathered with them.

His address at the service held in memory of deceased members of the Conference, was one not to be forgotten by those who heard it. Its spirit was sweet, sympathetic, and tender, well befitting the speaker and the occasion.

The legislation of this Conference generally was of a high order of merit. The event of the session was the

adoption, by a vote of 126 to 42, of a plan for equal lay and ministerial representation in the General Conference, on a *pro rata* basis. And thus was enacted a law, by a gratifyingly large vote, that will vitally affect the future life and polity of the Church. Other enactments, though of minor importance, were progressive in spirit, well befitting a Church with its face clearly set to the future. The centenary character of this General Conference gave new and added emphasis to the providential history and mission of the Church.

For the fourth time J. W. Hott was elected to the bishop's office. His colleagues, Castle, Kephart, and Mills were also reëlected. The district plan of superintendence adopted four years before had given such satisfaction that it was continued, and the bishops were stationed as follows: East District, Mills; Ohio District, Kephart; Central District, Hott; West District, Castle.

On the day preceding the final adjournment of the Conference, Bishop Hott was taken quite ill, and was so prostrated that he decided to return to his home as early as possible. His devoted friend, Dr. D. R. Miller, was a traveling companion from Frederick to Dayton. On the way they discussed matters at some length that had been before the General Conference. He then referred to the superintendents' districts as arranged by the Conference, and especially to the one to which he had been assigned. Then he said: "Mine is a good district. It has in it some excellent conferences and many noble men. It is a fine field for full and vigorous work of the bishop. I may get to it and do some of the work expected of me, but that with me is a question." Then, pausing for a moment, he looked Dr. Miller firmly in the face, and said, "Yes, I may possibly get to my district and do a little work, but only a little, if any. I shall not complete the work assigned me by the Conference." Then, with some degree of em-

phasis, he added, "D. R., I shall never attend another General Conference. I shall never again meet you in a Conference. I am going home to die rather than to engage in active service. If it were ordered so, I should be pleased to give my district a full term of service, but I am assured that the Master is ordering otherwise, and I shall accept as wise and just his order."

How the bishop became thus impressed that his end was near he did not state. At the time, however, he was calm, deliberate, and capable, and as a thoughtful, dutiful child he seemed submissive to whatsoever the whisperings of the Father might be.

While there seemed then to be no serious occasion for such fears, in the light of subsequent events his premonition was seen to be well grounded. It was hoped by his friends that, with rest after the strain of the General Conference and four years of most exacting care and toil, he would regain his wonted vigor. By all visible seeming he had the best of his career yet before him, and the Church needed him as it needed few other men.

May 29, at the home of his son-in-law, the Rev. J. G. Huber, Dayton, Ohio, Bishop Hott was married to Miss Marie Shank, a lady of rare Christian virtues and refinement. She had been reared and educated in the Church, and belongs to one of the wealthy and influential families of the Miami Valley. The marriage was solemnized by Dr. G. M. Mathews, in the presence of two of the bishop's daughters and sons-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Lorenz, of New York City, and the Rev. and Mrs. J. G. Huber. This was felt to be a very happy union, Mrs. Hott being admirably adapted to the duties and responsibilities of a minister's wife, and especially to be the wife of a bishop in the Church. After a season of rest in Virginia, Bishop and Mrs. Hott proposed to make their home in the central West, where his episcopal residence should be located during the next

four years. But alas for human plans and expectations! The visit to the dear old Virginia home, with all its fascinating charms, was never made. Nothing was ever done in a definite way as to the choice of a place of residence within the Central District, though there was some correspondence about it. The physical prostration of the bishop steadily became more complete and alarming. His sickness was an indescribable one. From the first, in his mind it seemed a hopeless fight. Early in the struggle the fear he would not recover utterly and absolutely left him. He sought its return, but in vain. The physicians could not locate any fatal disease, nor could he himself absolutely fix upon any organ where the breakdown and pain were most pronounced. His courage and iron will, that had given him victory in so many severe struggles, somehow failed him now. To the grief of his friends, he slowly lost interest in the objects and employments of his life and love, and they were saddened in view of the inevitable. But he was ever kind and patient, ever gentle and thoughtful. Long weeks of sleepless nights and torn, tried nerves were no excuse for impatient words when noises of playing children reached his room. He never, never spoke a hasty or unkind word, nor did he ever in his days of health indulge in harsh criticism of a friend or member of the family. The law of kindness was on his lips to the last.

But he had put the pressure of will on his life so long that the whole system, the entire mechanism, gave way at once, and there was no material left for repairs. The fuel supply was exhausted. Day after day he made the impression upon his faithful attendants of a man utterly exhausted, but who could not find his resting-place. He could neither eat, drink, nor sleep—nature would not let him die nor would it provide a transient shelter for repose until his hour was here. Many, many times he said, "Oh, that I had

the wings of a dove! How quickly then I would fly away and be at rest." His body had served him well, but his travels and labors, his unwearied devotion to his invalid wife, together with his work on the Ohio District—these shattered his nerves; they wore him out, and his strength ebbed away never to come back.

Eminent specialists were consulted. They agreed in diagnosis, but none could prescribe a remedy. The best of care in sanitarium, hospital, and home was given him, but failed to give relief or hope. The affectionate care of wife and children could do nothing but call forth from the patient the warmest expressions of appreciation for what was done for him, even to the last day. Nothing could be done to restore the wasted, exhausted vital energies of either body or brain, and after months of weary and painful affliction Bishop James W. Hott died, January 9, 1902, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He had been forty years a minister, and nearly thirteen years a bishop.

A year or more before his demise he began to decline in health and vigor, though he did not relinquish his labors and anxious care for the Church and its prosperity. Every energy of his being was summoned for his crowning work in the historic Frederick Conference, to which he had looked with deepest interest, and of which he had expectantly written, during the four years preceding; and when the work of that gathering was over, he hastened to his home, the work of his strenuous life finished.

During the last weeks of his life he sent loving messages to the Church and to his dear old mother in her far-off Virginia home. There was something deeply pathetic about some of his last utterances, occasioned by his grievous affliction. It was a sorrowful and yet a sweet privilege to Mrs. Hott to be at his bedside during the tedious months of his prostration, and tenderly to minister to his comfort till he breathed his last.

The last two and one-half years of his life he made his home with his youngest daughter, Mattie, and his shelter here was to him an unspeakable solace during the long months of his affliction. While he himself decided to make trial of the improved processes of a sanitarium, when the hour came his leave-taking from his library and home was most pathetic.

As his condition became more critical, his eldest daughter, Mrs. D. E. Lorenz, of New York City, hastened to assist in his care. His second daughter, Mrs. J. H. Francis, of Los Angeles, California, also came, and during the dark days of approaching death ministered lovingly to his needs. His brother, the Rev. George P. Hott, of Dayton, Virginia, arrived two days before the end, and received fullest and warmest recognition. He and the two daughters from a distance remained for the sad burial services.

The funeral was held in the Oak Street Church Monday afternoon, January 13. Dr. H. H. Fout, the former pastor of the church, had charge of the services, Mr. Huber, the present pastor, being a member of the sorrowing family. In introducing the services Dr. Fout, with deep emotion, said:

"My friends, we have come together to-day to render the last service that love, and grief, and assured hope can give to our distinguished friend and brother, whom we knew so well and loved so warmly. It is difficult for us to realize that Bishop Hott is dead. The Church of his choice and love, in whose history he has wrought so conspicuously during the past quarter of a century, sits to-day under the shadow of a great sorrow; and while we are assembled, thousands are looking this way with hearts overburdened with grief because of a sense of loss, and overflowing with joy because he lived. The presence to-day of this large audience speaks more eloquently than words of the place he held in the affections of the people. Our hearts ache with a sense of



personal loss. He opened to us his heart and his home. When our burdens were the heaviest, he helped us to carry them, and when our spirits were gloomiest he often spoke the word that made us hope again.

"We are here to thank God for the rich inheritance he has left us. His virtues remain with us in tender, loving memory. They are ours forever. . . . Our dear, departed bishop has left an enduring memorial in the hearts of hundreds and thousands who have been touched by his life, and won to Christ by his ministry."

These remarks were followed by a brief invocation by Dr. I. L. Kephart, while the organist played softly and slowly, "Lead, Kindly Light."

Prayer was offered by Dr. Funkhouser, and an appreciative sketch of the bishop's life was read by Dr. G. M. Mathews. Addresses were made by Bishops Kephart and Mills, in which fitting tributes were paid to their departed associate, and by Dr. W. M. Bell and Dr. W. J. Shuey. The latter had long been intimately associated with the bishop, and he spoke with deep feeling as a close personal friend. Dr. J. P. Landis gave a tribute of love and gratitude from the present writer, who had been so many years associated with the bishop in editorial work. A telegram from Bishop Castle, from the Pacific Coast, was read, asking to have read Isaiah 52:7 and I. Corinthians 15:55-58.

The Union Biblical Seminary Quartet sang several beautiful hymns of consolation and hope, "Peace, Be Still," "We are going down the valley," and "Wonderful Peace." The services in the church closed with a prayer of gratitude and hope by Dr. W. R. Funk. The occasion will always be memorable for its impressiveness.

The body of Bishop Hott was carried by his brethren in the ministry to the grave, in Woodland Cemetery, where it was deposited to await the event of promised resurrection. In this beautiful city of the dead now



rest the remains of three of the beloved bishops of the Church—Edwards, Weaver, Hott.

The wide expressions of grief which the death of Bishop Hott called forth, are sufficient to indicate the large and deep hold he had on the Church, and many have been led to wonder at the providence of God that he should not have lived beyond fifty-seven years.

There must be something unusual about a life with so humble a beginning, beset with obstacles, that rises to such eminence and power. Such a life was that of James W. Hott. This country boy, with humble and poor parents, and with nothing advantageous to give him earthly prestige, in the providence of God rises through successive stages to the very pinnacle of commanding influence and leadership in a great Church. By what law was this ascent made but by that of noble living and personal worth? The way of righteousness is the way to truest honor and surest success.

## CHAPTER X.

### LETTERS.

THE art of letter-writing is sometimes said to be one of the lost arts, but that was not the case with James W. Hott. He was notably accomplished as a letter-writer. Much of his correspondence for the *Religious Telescope*, when he was its editor and since, was of the nature of letter-writing. He had the happy faculty of writing about what he saw and heard, even about things in themselves trivial, in a way to interest and please his readers. There was always an ease and graciousness about his writings of this character that made and perpetuated the closest friendships.

On the score of penmanship merely, the bishop was never a good writer. He wrote a hand exceedingly difficult to read by those not familiar with it; but those accustomed to his writing, like the *Telescope* compositors, proof-readers, and familiar friends, could read it with comparative ease.

His poor writing did not come with the stress of public duties which required rapid penmanship. He was always a poor writer. When a young man, during the days of his courtship, it is said he was accustomed to employ a brother to perform the part of John Alden.

It is also said that when he first wrote a letter to his mother on a typewriter she protested against his doing so again, assigning as a reason that, in reading a typewritten letter she got all there was in it at the first reading, but that from a letter written in his own hand she was always able to get something new out of it at

every reading. Asking his mother as to the correctness of this alleged statement, she simply said, "I think they have exaggerated it some." However this may be, many of the bishop's correspondents have had an experience not unlike that of his mother, often provokingly annoying. But he wrote rapidly, and often under difficulties, as when traveling and late at night, and it is a marvel that his voluminous correspondence had such uniform sprightliness and interest. His letters were strongly typical of the man.

Among the sweetest and best letters Bishop Hott ever wrote are those written to his mother, of which hundreds are preserved. He wrote her often. The few that here follow are characteristic. In the first one there are tender references to the deaths of his sister Ella and brother Charlie.

"WOODBRIDGE, CAL., January 29, 1891.

"DEAR MOTHER: Your letter dated January 16 came to me last evening. Oh, I was so glad to have a line—a dear good letter—from your own hand once more. I appreciate it the more because I know how hard it was for you to write. I can imagine how broken in spirit you are. I have written to you once or twice since we heard of Ella's death.

"I see now, dear mother, that our home is over yonder. We shall all go there to rest by and by. God knows best whom to call home first. None were so well prepared as dear Ella and Charlie. All would say that.

"I do not know why we should be so sad because they go. If they had been called to some position of earthly joy and honor we should all have been greatly delighted. But it is to a much greater honor and joy that they have been called. They have no pain or sorrow, or care or trials. They are at home with the Savior. They see the King in his beauty. It was not long



AGED PARENTS OF BISHOP HOTT.



before Brother Charlie went that he said you were all with him in the room—David, father, and all. We shall all be together soon. . . .

“Yes, I would love to be with you and stay a long, long time, but I am here, far away; still my heart is not far from you. I love you as tenderly as ever, yea, more than ever before. I pray for you every day. We often talk of you in our little family. Of course, it is a great trial for me to be so far away from you in these sorrows; but distance is nothing with God. He is everywhere, and we can pray to him and love each other as if we were together. I hope to see you again in the flesh, but I do not know when. I hope you will cultivate a hopeful and cheerful spirit. Excessive grief cannot help you or us. God will bring us together again. . . . May the God of all comfort be with you and keep you.

“Your affectionate son,  
“J. W. HOTT.”

Here is a part of a beautiful Christmas letter:

“DAYTON, OHIO, December 22, 1897.

“DARLING MOTHER: Have I not told you that your dear good Christmas letter came promptly to us? Well, it did, and in it the check for Christmas present to us. How can I thank you as I ought? Not in all my life has my heart been more touched to tenderness and love than by this entirely unexpected remembrance in so handsome a sum; and the joy was the greater that you were thoughtful enough to say that you had been able alike to remember all those so dear to us. And now Martha joins me in sincerest thanks to you and many a loving wish for you a happy Christmas. We shall always remember your loving gift with highest appreciation and love. . . . There will be sent you from Dayton a solid silver spoon as a little Christmas

present, with this request that if you like it you use it every meal. . . . Give my love to all the dear ones there. My dear mother, how I do wish you could be here with us during this cold weather. We never had so comfortable a home in all our lives, and never so few to enjoy it with us. You may not have thought that we are getting old and have none of our children with us.

"Here is a big heartful of love to you all.

"Your loving son,

"JIMMIE."

This is a letter written to his mother after receiving one from her in regard to the death of Mrs. Hott a short time before:

"DAYTON, OHIO, August 23, 1899.

"MY DARLING MOTHER: Your loving letter came to me yesterday. Many thanks to you for it. Yes, yes, I know how your great loving heart has been broken for us all here.

"There is so much about all the sweet, sad past of which I would love to write you. In truth, I am too broken down to write you at all. This fall, late, I hope to see you. How I am to live I cannot plan. When I think how you have walked alone these fifteen years I ought not to complain that I am asked to follow in the same steps a few short years; then we shall be together again. We have so many things for which we ought to be thankful. Not the least in our comfort is the fact that for two years God gave it to me to care for her here under such favorable surroundings. I dare to say that no one could be more tenderly cared for than was she. Her life was, for the last two years, a beautiful going down of the sun. . . . I start in for a three months' tour of conferences to-morrow. I will write you as often as I can. Though I am in sor-



row, I am not cast down. My hope is in the Father of us all, and he sustains me. He has held me up through these months past, and will do so in the future, I am sure. I can do no better than to trust him, and I do. May the God of peace and love keep you always.

“Your loving son,  
“JIMMIE.”

There are two letters written only a short time prior to his death. The first one is not dated, though plainly written in the last stages of his sickness, and the other one, while written December 3, was not mailed till after his death. They both bear evidence of a loyal and noble son, whose devotion to his mother remained with him to the end as one of the most distinct traits of his character. These last letters follow:

“MY DEAR MOTHER: It has been weeks since I have written a line to any one. Now I will try to pencil you a few lines, if only a few. I am too weak and nervous to write long at a time. I have now been shut in my room five weeks, and have suffered much. I do not think any one could have been cared for better. I spend most of my time in bed. Walk about the room and hall for five minutes at a time. . . . Am very weak.

“The above writing represents two efforts. I never loved you as much as I do now. God is good and always has been. I thank you for all your sweet love to me, in all the past and now. I doubt if the doctors know what is the matter with me. If so, they do not tell me. If I am to get well, it will take a long time; so it seems. I am some stronger than I was a few days ago. How it will go with me the dear Lord knows and keeps in his secrets. I have all my conferences planned for, so that I have peace of mind. Oh, it is so hard to stay here and suffer and wait when there is so much

to do. But I leave that all with the Lord. . . . I ought not write so much about myself, only I know how anxious you are to know about me. I do not know how all this is to go with me. I have been looking the future, and the crossing to it, openly in the face for weeks. I only feel assured that in any event the loving Lord will not forsake me. There are many more that we love over there than here, and soon we shall all be home. How I long to see you! I love you with all my heart. I must close this. God bless you all.

"In undying love,

Your son,

"J. W. HOTT."

"DAYTON, OHIO, December 3, 1901.

"DEAR MOTHER: Your letter of love came duly to me. I thank you for all it contains. I would love to see you once more. This, it seems, cannot be. I often think of you and long for your welfare. I would love to be a comfort to you and all in these last days. I know I am a source of great anxiety to you and all my kindred. Suda wrote me a dear good letter, which came two days ago. How I would love to see her and you all in the old-time joy and health and love. I thank you all for all your sweet love, and long to be forgiven for all the sorrow and pains and anguish I have brought to you. I shall not see you all again, but no doubt will carry memories of you with me forever. The full meaning of this I cannot comprehend now. This is a poor letter, but it seems all that I can produce now. I love you all as ever. I could only wish that your days might be full of blessing and sunshine. I remain,

"Your most unworthy son,

"J. W. HOTT."

"P. S. The last six months have so changed me that I could not write to you, though I longed to be able to do so. This is a poor letter, and perhaps ought not to

be written or sent, but this much it will tell you, that you are always remembered by me. You know that we are in great sorrow, and my condition is not understood by my people, nor by the Church, and cannot be. It is a great mystery to myself—the mystery of all mysteries. I think of Suda and Jimmie and their children with great tenderness and love. How unworthy the love she bears me I am! I long that your days on earth may end with better conditions than my own. I have many things I would like to say, but cannot write them, nor would they profit us if said.

“From your oldest son,  
“J. W. HOTT.”

These two letters, containing the last messages of the bishop to loved ones, are characteristic. They show his thought and care of others. Suda is his sister and Jimmie his brother-in-law, who live with and care for his mother.

The following letter contains an expression of appreciation, whether deserved or not, that shows Bishop Hott was not a believer in exclusive posthumous commendation:

“LONDON, ENGLAND, September 12, 1881.

“MY DEAR BROTHER DRURY: The *Telescope* of August 31 is here to-day—just two weeks after you put it to the press. Well done! You have made a good and interesting and judiciously arranged paper. I could not wish it better. Before this time you have received something from me. I sent you a letter on the conference last week and will send you more. . . . How much I should love to see you all! I imagine you are real snug in your improved quarters. My kindest regards to your family and to any of the dear friends who ask after me,

Your brother,  
“J. W. HOTT.”

## 148 *Life and Career of James William Hott*

In response to a letter written Mr. Hott respecting the painful accident which befell him as he was coming out of the Yosemite Valley, there came this letter:

“WOODBRIDGE, CAL., June 17, 1887.

“*Rev. M. R. Drury.*

“DEAR BROTHER: Your kind letter came to me a few days ago. I have not been in a condition to write anything for the press. It has taken all my time and attention and strength to grapple with the wreck in this foot of mine. I never knew what one member could suffer. God has been wonderfully good in many ways, and, as I can now see, not least in allowing me to reach the home of Brother Statton and this community, where unbounded sympathy and kindness have been about me everywhere, and where I have had the most faithful attention of a skilled physician and surgeon, Dr. Riley. Though I suffer severely, I get four or five hours' sleep each night. Last night I did that well, at least, without anything to induce sleep. The swelling has largely subsided, the bruises have been healed, and the broken bones are evidently joining together properly. In a few weeks, at most, I hope to be able to start homeward.

“Yours as ever,

“J. W. HOTT.”

A letter of sympathy, written the bishop after the death of his cherished brother, the Rev. C. M. Hott, brought this response:

“WOODBRIDGE, CALIFORNIA, July 23, 1890.

“*Rev. M. R. Drury.*

“DEAR BROTHER: Your kind letter of condolence came to me some days ago. I assure you every token of remembrance by those with whom I have labored in

other and happier years, comes to us with tenderest thankfulness. God has given us to walk in deep solitude and overwhelming sorrow. A few months ago we were very happy here. Charlie was a good, unselfish, broad-minded counselor. Then, he was so strong in the pulpit, and devout in spirit and life, that he made a tower of strength here for us that gave me good courage for the work. What a hold he had on the people! Now he lies out in the cemetery, and has no voice to speak. No, I must think differently. He 'hath obtained a better inheritance.' . . . You see, we are needing some strong men here. We are so much in need of a few commanding men. I mean men of commanding influence and character. This morning I went down to the parsonage, and somehow my heart grew homesick and I heart-sick. I would love to see you and have a long talk with you. I often wonder when and where we shall meet again. You cannot imagine that I have forgotten the years of our mutual toil together. If I had them to go over again I would try to make them sweeter and better to those with whom I toiled, and more Christian and spiritual to myself. As it was, I tried to do the best I could. Doubtless you understand that. I have often felt that I wanted to tell you many things which I thought and felt in the way of appreciation, but lacked opportunity. I presume many things must remain unspoken till we are clothed upon of immortality. I wonder after all what we do carry of earth and of earth's ties and memories through that mysterious change we call death. Recently I have had great anxiety on that subject, respecting much I should like to know, and seem to be in the dark. But Father knows, and we shall know more by and by. Till then we doubtless do well to hope and wait. . .

"Your brother,  
"J. W. HORT."

Bishop Hott's appreciation of sympathy is indicated in the following brief reply to a letter written him on hearing of the death of Mrs. Hott:

"DAYTON, OHIO, August 14, 1899.

"*Rev. M. R. and Mrs. Drury.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER DRURY: This is to thank you for your loving and comforting letter, which comes to us as we walk in the valley of a deep sorrow.

"Your brother,  
"J. W. HOTT."

The letters of the bishop could easily be extended, but these are sufficient for present purposes. They are typical, and serve to show especially his great tenderness of heart, sweetness of spirit, and generosity of soul. The utterances in these letters, which were never intended for the public, like the little daily deeds of life, are the clearest revelation of character and the surest criterion of the thoughts and intents of the nature within.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PREACHING AND SERMONS.

WHATEVER else Bishop Hott was, he was preëminently a preacher—warm-hearted, thoughtful, evangelical, eloquent. When only a boy he attracted wide attention as a preacher and as an expounder of the Word of God. In 1870 he preached at a camp-meeting in Page County, Virginia. A man by the name of Benjamin Hensley heard him, and was so impressed that, on meeting his neighbor, James Maiden, he said with earnestness, "Jimmie, I have heard the man with ten talents to-day."

Mr. Hott's zeal and power in the pulpit early made him the favorite and pride of his conference and of the churches he served. The new demands upon him from time to time, through the several degrees of his advancement, seemed to call out not only more preaching force, but more organizing and guiding power as well. His preaching was uniformly of the cheerful, soulful type. In this may be found one of the chief secrets of his superior power in the pulpit and on the platform. In the days of his pastoral labors he was especially successful in work among young people. His active sympathy with evangelistic work caused him to devote his energies largely to winning souls, a work in which he met with marked success.

The statistics of his conference during the period of his work in it are so very meager that it is impossible to ascertain with definiteness the results of his labors; but from the records for a few years, and from reasonable estimates for the remainder of the time, it is prob-



able that about one thousand people were converted under his pastoral ministry, most of whom were received into the Church.

In revival meetings Mr. Hott was characterized by tremendous earnestness and loving tact, both in the pulpit and in personal work. He easily forgot all formality and aimed at practical results.

He had a good preaching voice. It was strong and oftentimes musical. There were many times, in great churches and convention halls, or in meetings in the open air, when his voice rang out with extraordinary volume and power. He likewise had a winsome manner.

There were two elements that entered largely into his preaching: In the first place, the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ was a personal joy to him, and was ever and everywhere a bell summoning straying sheep back to the fold. In the second place, his preaching abounded in those qualities which afford comfort and encouragement to the struggling and sorrowful. He preached the gospel of good cheer, and that with all his heart; hence he rarely failed to win and hold the attention of his hearers. This was not due alone to his pleasing pulpit address, though that was markedly attractive. His preaching was strong, both in thought and in the simplicity and force of his language. He had that peculiar and almost indefinable gift of recognizing manhood in his hearers. He had a deep and abiding conviction that only so far as man is in Christ and like Christ can he attain to the standard which the Creator—Redeemer—would have him reach. This made him a mighty preacher of the essential gospel; for he believed, without the least misgiving, that the Christianity of the Bible is the only gospel worth preaching in the highways and hedges of humanity, because it alone is the one power of God unto salvation for all who will accept it.

The preaching of Bishop Hott did not consist of insipid appeals and aimless exhortations which leave no permanent impression. Rather, his sermons invariably had a solid foundation in doctrinal truth, expressed, not in the language of the schools, but of the English Scriptures and of the common people. As has always been the case with great preachers, so it was with him, his messages had their root in Bible truth and a deep personal experience of the reality of that truth, enabling him to speak with a fervor and conviction, which sent the message home with unerring precision.

Then another distinct characteristic of his preaching was its striking parabolic form, resembling that of the Master Preacher, of whom it is said, "Without a parable spake he not unto them." His vivid imagination and his remarkable aptness in drawing lessons from nature and from the common occurrences of life, enabled him to illustrate his sermons with the most lifelike pictures, which are to the mind what diagrams are to the eye. They were the windows of truth which let in the light and made the message convincing.

In this connection it is deserving of mention that the preaching of Bishop Hott had a peculiar charm for young men. This was a notable fact, and the frequency of his calls to preach on commencement occasions, and to address meetings under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association, is ample proof of this statement. That he was thus popular with young men was no doubt due to the fact, as previously remarked, that he recognized the manhood of his hearers, and this won for him their confidence and attention. He preached a strong, manly Christianity, which, like the preaching of St. Paul, abounded in the strongest appeals to manhood: "Quit you like men, be strong." "Endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ." "Fight the good fight of faith." "So run that ye may obtain."

The preacher who thus respects the manhood of his hearers, and does not simply throw out to them handfuls of "commonplaces decked in baby words," or who does not "dilute the strength of his message with the water of sentiment and namby-pamby whimperings," is the preacher of winning power and usefulness. And it should never be forgotten that only those who have the power to win the young to Christ's service and to train them wisely therein, are deserving of special distinction as leaders in the church or as benefactors of the race. The preacher or other Christian worker who has learned the secret of successfully working for the life and growth of the young has learned the secret of the highest service to the world, the most far-reaching and permanent service to his fellow-men. This is the unmistakable teaching of the centuries, in all human experience, from the days of Abraham to the present.

It is, therefore, a matter for devout gratitude that we have in Bishop Hott so worthy an example of one who had the sanctified genius of so preaching the gospel to the young as to save them from the guilt and power of sin, and to build them up in holy character and living.

The bishop's own ideals of preaching are suggestively given in an article in the *Religious Telescope* of October 7, 1891, entitled "The Interesting Sermon." In this he says: "It is a crime for a sermon to be dull, prosy, and dry. An uninteresting, sleep-inspiring preacher is a criminal. The gospel is the most interesting theme that has ever been handled by the lips of man. Its facts are the profoundest to awaken lofty thought; its range the broadest to enkindle and expand the imagination; its love the most passionate and holy and divine to stir the heart to its profoundest depths. The calling of the ministry is divine, and should awaken all the powers and exercises of the mind, heart, and body. Its relation to the hearer is of

eternal moment. Therefore, for a sermon to be uninteresting is a crime against the gospel message, against the divine commission and the soul of the hearer, against the very spirit of the gospel.

"Some sermons have too much argument in them. Logic is a cold study, and usually much logic cools off the sermon. The preacher argues away like a mechanic boring a hole in a great timber with a modern boring machine. The logic is intended to penetrate the minds of the hearers. The sermon is the preacher's logical power and his ability to bore his audience. True preaching is declaring, proclaiming the gospel more than proving some theory which has no saving efficacy in it. Now and then a sermon on Christian evidences may be well, indeed; but the gospel truth has been proved ten thousand times. Now it wants preaching—warm, earnest, heart-felt, heart-breaking, heart-inspiring preaching. That kind is always interesting.

"Some sermons are too metaphysical to interest people. It makes one shiver to hear a preacher announce a good text and then at once to pour into the people a cold metaphysical drizzle three-fourths of an hour long. To these drizzles we prefer a shower of grace. I would rather have an old-fashioned storm, full of lightning and thunder, in the pulpit than one of these cold drizzles.

"Many a sermon is uninteresting because it is too loosely prepared. The hearer can tell in the first five sentences that the preacher has made imperfect preparation. He has words and stuff enough to make the size of a sermon, but too much straw and chaff instead of wheat. The speaker lacks the warmth born of a new idea. A hearer said the other day, 'I do not think that preacher has had a new thought for a year.' No doubt the criticism was too severe; but platitudes and commonplace observations, monologues in the pulpit, lack the fire which stirs men's souls. Some one has tersely

and truthfully said that a sermon should make the hearer glad, or make him sad, or make him mad. Every sermon is a new thing, and it ought to put old truths in new forms.

"Too many sermons lack in interest because of a mere essay style. They lack division and paragraphing and punctuation. They are just 'long-drawn-out-ness.' There are no peaks of thought from which you look over the valley and upon other lofty peaks. They have the plane and monotony of the desert. They are like a sentence without division, or capitalization, or punctuation. They are this way: 'Thenthe mariners were afraid and cried every man to his god and cast forth the ware that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them but jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship and he lay and was fast asleep.' We want points in the pulpit, not smart things. There is nothing more disgusting than a cheap witicism in a sermon. It makes a man weary and heart-sick to hear a preacher, instead of preaching the great inspiring truth of God, trying to be smart, and to say smart things. This cracking cheap jokes in the pulpit is most awful.

"How can the preacher make the sermon interesting?

"1. Put more warm Bible facts into it. Do not merely use the Bible for a text, but for development and illustration as well. The Bible is the most interesting book in the world. Its historic parts are full of illustrations for the sermon. They show truth in the concrete. They give God's truth clothed in flesh and filled with life—the truth with hands and feet and heart. That is always more interesting and impressive than abstract truth. . . .

"2. Many sermons would be vastly more interesting if the preacher would press the text a little harder. Often the preacher is hard pressed for a text, but does not in turn press the text. There is an old story of a man who had four propositions in his sermon: (1) He

would come up to his text; (2) he would go round about the text; (3) he would pass through the text; (4) and lastly he would depart from his text. It is very common nowadays for preachers to preach *from* the text. It often discourages a hearer to have a preacher announce a good text and then at once start off on a slow trot to some place a quarter or a half mile in a northeasterly direction from the text. It is better to make the context, that which precedes and that which succeeds, two jaws of a vice with which to squeeze the text real hard. Many a dry sermon might have warm juice in it if the preacher would just press the text a little harder.

"3. Many sermons would be greatly improved at the last by cutting them squarely off. There is great need of compressing the last fifteen or twenty minutes of many sermons into five minutes. Oh, for a compressor or curtailer of the sermon! One-half of our sermons are injured, if not absolutely spoiled, by being too long. They are continued and tapered out till they seem to be endless. . . . The interesting preacher can always make the sermon somewhat pleasing by quitting.

"4. A preacher and his sermon must be steeped in prayer. How can the Holy Spirit use a sermon unless the preacher is softened by prayer? Before modern homiletics was so well understood, generally, by our preachers, and before we got so precise in our tastes about the fit of our sermons, the giants of the church made much preparation in prayer. Our old preachers used to kneel down and engage in silent prayer upon entering the pulpit. That has gone out of vogue, I believe; they say it smacks of cant, and that it is well that it is out of use. Well, it may be so; I am not sure. . . . Better praying would vastly improve our preaching. Oh, for God in the sermon, for living, soul-stirring, and soul-loving sermons!"

We have here a very clear indication of the style,



spirit, and habits of the writer in his own varied and powerful preaching.

In 1887 Bishop Hott preached the baccalaureate at the commencement of San Joaquin Valley College, on the occasion of his first visit to the Pacific Coast. The Rev. I. K. Statton, a life-long friend of the bishop, then college pastor at Woodbridge, says of that sermon: "It was a masterful effort for freshness and vigor of thought, logical deductions, and heart power, which won and moved these staid, businesslike Californians in such a manner as they were not used to."

At the biennial convention of the Young People's Christian Union, held in Lebanon, Pa., in July, 1900, the convention sermon was preached by Bishop Hott, and it could not have been better suited to the occasion. The discourse was strong, simple, and copiously illustrated, and made a profound impression. The following is the outline of the sermon as found in his Bible:

### *How Many Loaves?*

Text: "How many loaves have ye?" (Matt. 15: 34).

Introduction. 1. Healing miracles much emphasized. 2. Need to dwell upon feeding. Preserve before healing. 3. Twice fed the multitude: In the early spring, soon after the death of John the Baptist; five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, twelve basketfuls remaining; all the Gospels mention it. Again in the summer, four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes. Matthew and Mark give it.

#### THE ELEMENTS IN MIRACLE.

##### I. *His sympathy for the masses.*

1. He anticipates. Not appealed to as before. (a) They had been with Him three days—parts of two nights; (b) He wants nothing to eat.



## II. *Human instrumentality in supply.*

1. He wishes to enlist disciples. (a) Tells them of his sympathy. (b) Wanted to use them. (c) Appealed to them for supply.

2. He used their scanty supply. (a) Took it lovingly. (b) Gave thanks—blessed. (c) Had the disciples orderly distribute. (d) Had the disciples gather the fragments. Such is the story, blessed.

### LESSONS.

1. Jesus to-day is full of compassion. Pictures of Christ cursing the world are false.

2. He reveals himself to us to enlist us.

3. He calls upon us for the supply of the world's needs.

*Loaves. What? How many?*

1. Sympathy and love like His, that sees others' needs, and feels others' perils.

2. Readiness to distribute like Jesus, in prayer, fellowship, help.

3. Faith to offer the loaves we know are inadequate. Our resources fail. Danger of forgetting. His former use of our meager supply.

4. He deigns to use our scanty lives. Our feeble prayers, small offerings, silent tears, kind words, broken, humble, poor, but blameless life. His blessings make all a supply.

5. He honors us in this use.

*Conclusion.*

1. How many loaves have we?

2. Have we fully offered what we have? A young man at Westfield said, "I will give myself. Forsaking all I take Him."

While Bishop Hott's sermons may have lacked somewhat in scholarly finish, they were ever characterized by great vigor and freshness. His manner of preach-

ing was clearly his own, and when at his best he had few equals. Few men, certainly few in the United Brethren Church, have ever known better how to attract the eye and ear of the public. His many calls for preaching is in evidence of this fact. He not only preached widely throughout his own denomination, but he often filled the pulpits of other churches with great acceptability. When living on the Pacific Coast he preached and lectured frequently for the Brooklyn Presbyterian Church, at Oakland, California, of which Dr. E. S. Chapman was then the pastor. He also preached in the leading churches of Portland, Stockton, Los Angeles, and other cities. The same was true in the East. Lists of the sermons preached in some of these places he left in a book devoted to such purposes. One of these lists shows that he preached thirteen times in Grace Methodist Church, Dayton, Ohio. Another shows that he preached seventeen times at the National Soldiers' Home. He supplied the pulpit there for some time during the last illness of Chaplain Wm. Earnshaw, to whom he was warmly attached, and after his death he was offered the chaplaincy of the Home, which he declined, preferring to continue in the service of the Church of his choice and love.

During one year, 1878-79, the Summit Street United Brethren Church, of Dayton, Ohio, was without a regular pastor, the pulpit being supplied by J. W. Hott and W. O. Tobey, editors of the *Religious Telescope*, and S. M. Hippard, agent of Union Biblical Seminary. This was at a time when this congregation was heavily in debt and passing through a period of peculiar trials and unrest, and the preaching of Mr. Hott had much to do in promoting harmony and good will. His sermons were marked by a deep spirituality and great kindness of heart. In that year the subjects of the first three sermons preached were: "The Cross Made of None Effect," "The Sinner Saved," and "Looking

at Unseen Things." He was always a favorite preacher in that church.

Bishop Hott's sermons were sometimes marvelous specimens of analysis. This, however, was not so apparent to the hearer, as his skeletons in preaching were never placed on exhibition. In the sermon they were all clothed with flesh and filled with life, and so had proportion and comeliness. A notable example of his power and habit of analysis in preparing his sermons is found in the following outline:

*The New Commandment.*

Text: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13: 34, 35).

Introduction.

1. There are few new things. In books, art, music.
2. Solomon says, "No new thing" (Eccl. 1: 9).
3. Jesus, as to facts and teachings, always new.

Illustration: Supper scene—among (*a*) ambitions, (*b*) jealousies, (*c*) denied, (*d*) betrayed. He loves all; washes feet of all.

An inspiring, new program for the world.

I. *Brotherly love, as the law of Christianity and the race, came from Jesus as a new commandment.*

1. Start on text of this last great sermon.
2. See I. John 2: 8.
3. Love in the world before, but—
4. Jesus organized into law. Companionship of Jesus is law.

Three great principles sought mastery.

1. Power. Jupiterism, Cæsarism, Imperialism. Rome its example. (a) In self-perpetuation of God. (b) In control of world. Emperors won deification by blood. As in "Quo Vadis." Acts of senate swayed by despotism.
2. Wisdom. Philosophy. Greece, its example. Philosophy came from mythology. Wisdom enslaved power.
3. Justice, law. (a) Scene of Moses giving the law. (b) World's first lesson in law. Judaism its example. Rabbis, teachers.

Jesus, a solitary figure.

Rose above all. With few disciples, mostly women. With symbols of Rome, Greece, Judaism crowding Him, gave law of brotherhood.

A new commandment.

Fill all power, wisdom, law, with love.

## II. *Manner of establishing this new law.*

"I give it." "I" in His teachings.

1. Jesus' relation to Roman power. (a) Ignored political methods wholly. See Luke 20:25, "Render." (b) Touched Roman instrument of death, the cross, and made it the symbol of love forever.

2. Jesus' relation to philosophy, wisdom. (a) Ignored all learned methods. Never philosophizes. Never *seeks* truth. See John 7:15, "How knoweth," etc. (b) Is all truth. Does not make wisdom the door to his kingdom. Philosophers did. They said, "None admitted here but mathematicians." He said, "Ye must be born again."

3. Jesus' relation to Hebrew law of justice. (a) Fulfilled. Of the second table. One "honor," five awful negatives—kill, adultery, steal, false witness, covet. (b) Epitomizes table. Matt. 22:39, "Thy neighbor as thyself." (c) Analyzes and treats the law. Matt. 5:

38-48, "Eye for eye," etc. V. 38, answer, v. 39. "Love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy." V. 43, answer, vs. 44-48.

Love, the new commandment in His life.

1. He lived his teachings.
2. Gave the world himself.

III. *New law in present, personal experience.*

1. Born in true convert. "If we love one another, God abideth in us" (I. John 4: 12).
2. Opens new fountain of joy in heart.
3. Reveals a new world about us.

IV. *Test and proof of discipleship.*

See I. Corinthians 13. Not (1) eloquent profession; (2) wisdom; (3) faith; (4) benevolence; (5) martyrdom;—but love. "By this shall men know."

V. *Example of Jesus gives us the measure of our conformity to this law.*

Not an inspiration to love as if he had said, "Since I loved," ye ought, but a pattern, type—"Even as I have loved you." (1) Unselfishly; (2) ceaselessly; (3) to the end.

In 1897 Scioto Conference was held in the old Dresbach Church, near Circleville, Ohio, and was presided over by Bishop Hott. This church was built in 1829. Here the General Conference of 1833 was held, presided over by Bishop Henry Kumler, Sr. There were but six conferences in the entire Church then. Heistand and Brown were the other bishops. The General Conference of 1841, so famous in our Church history, also assembled in this church, with twenty-three members, including two bishops. Here the constitution that gave the Church so much trouble in after years was adopted. With these historic memories before him, Bishop Hott preached a characteristic and timely sermon, of which the following is a synopsis:

*The Mantle of the Fathers.*

“‘And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?’ (II. Kings 2:14).

“We have been assembled three days in this old church erected nearly seventy years ago, in which our fathers assembled in the General Conference of 1833, and again in 1841. These historic memories were alluded to at the opening of our conference, yet I have not been able to free myself from their influence, as doubtless you have not. These early ministers are not here. ‘Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?’ Elijah’s history is well known to every Bible reader. His peculiar life and ministry are studied by all in all ages. But the time came ‘when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind.’ So our fathers passed away.

“Transition is the law of life. The history of our own Church is but a type of all church history, and all the general currents and circles of history. There stands out first the good revival period, the era of spiritual power, when the Spirit of God moves upon the face of the waters. This is followed by the period of crystallization, or the effort to form spiritual conditions and thoughts into creed and dogma. Here our fathers framed and adopted the constitution of the Church and endeavored to fix the creed for all time to come. Then follows an era of criticism and testing, of dogma and new thought, and new statement of thought. This is followed again by the larger spiritual manifestation under new and different conditions. We are now to expect a large outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

“One asks, naturally, What is the effect of these transitions? Can the world and the church hope for as much under the life of Elisha as it shared under Elijah? In another form of statement, Is the world

changing for the better, or for the worse? Respecting this there are two views: There is, first, the pessimistic view. It holds that the world is growing worse; it points to the formality of the church, and the worldliness in professing Christians; at the parade and show of religious piety where its real spirit is wanting; at the general greed for gain in the world, and at the oppression of the poor by great monopolies.

"Secondly, the optimist claims that the world is getting better. He asserts that the church and world have higher religious ideals, (which accounts for the pessimistic views,) that there is greater light upon error and sin, that there are larger and better conceptions of God, broader recognition of the brotherhood of man, more good people in the world, more servants of mankind in true love, more true love for mankind, better governments in the world, more and better educational, reformatory, and humane institutions, hundreds more of laborers in hospitals and prisons, and thousands of missionaries in heathen lands, with much better appliances for Christian work in all lands.

"This discourse is not to try directly to settle the mind of any one as to these views. Probably we all have our own ideas of these things. There are a few facts this text and its surroundings, as well as all history, teach us.

"I. The fathers had their Jordan to cross. It was so with Elijah. His life was illustrious. He was now on his way to the fastnesses of the Moab mountains, where he was to find the station where would halt the chariot of fire and steeds of fire to bear him up into heaven. Yet is the old prophet confronted with the Jordan. Our fathers met their difficulties.

"1. There were the low standards of morals in the public mind. We are accustomed to hear persons sigh for the good old times long past, when man thought and did only good, and when all things were as they



ought to be. No one can locate these good times. Go back to the times so pointed out by those of our day, and way back there is some one with the same spirit who rises and calls for the good old times. So on and on. Those good old days are largely a myth. Take, for illustration, the great temperance struggle. When our fathers here began legislation against the traffic in strong drink, they simply prescribed that preachers should not be allowed to manufacture and sell intoxicating drinks. And did preachers do so? Yes, and public sentiment allowed preachers to do so, and to drink intoxicants. Then the fathers legislated against the members of the church dealing in liquors. This was far in advance of public sentiment. It was a Jordan which stood in the way of the fathers, and they crossed it.

"2. Church formalism. We sometimes think our fathers lived in saintly times. Far from it. Otterbein found himself chilled and opposed and criticised, and practically, though not formally, cast out of an evangelical church because he proclaimed the religious experience of a holy life. Boehm was confronted by the same. George A. Guething, whose gentleness and sweetness of spirit have been handed down to our day in the very nature, spirit, and life of his descendants, was expelled from an orthodox church for his spiritual preaching and life. Formalism was a wide, deep Jordan, which the mantles of our fathers had to smite.

"II. The church of to-day has its own Jordans. Elisha must reach his field of toil and divine commission by way of the Jordan crossing. The fathers are only gone when the church is confronted by new problems. There are advances and changes of society. The church cannot stop them any more than you can blow out the sun in the morning as it climbs above the clouds and mountains of the East. There is a progress of the world; there is a change in the methods of

thought, and its basis as well as processes are not the same as in the days of the fathers. Conclusions of thought have ripened into convictions, opinions, and faiths far from those held by the fathers. There must therefore be different methods of reaching and saving men. To these tasks let us come with the heritage bequeathed by the fathers. When Elisha was left to the duties of a new day he held in his hands the mantle of Elijah.

"III. We have the same helps our fathers had.

"1. We have the same God. We walk in his light as the fathers did. All will agree to this.

"2. We have the same Bible. Oh, we have some revisions, and versions, and translations that our fathers did not have, but these can only help us the better to understand the Bible.

"3. We have the same Holy Spirit. He is not less in the world now than he was then.

"4. We have the same power of a godly life that our fathers had. These are the saving powers God uses in the world—the Bible, the Spirit, the holy life; upon these our fathers depended, and upon these we shall always depend. The one enforces the other. The Bible is the basis. The Spirit is the inward witness. To these the godly life bears witness to the world.

"Men may not read the Bible, but they will read us. Men may not recognize or own the Holy Spirit, but they will catch the spirit of our lives. These abide forever.

"IV. We must take up the mantle of our fathers. No man has a present power who does not connect with the heritage given by the fathers. Elijah promised a double portion of his spirit to Elisha only upon the condition that he see him when he is taken away. He who loses sight of the ascending Elijahs loses the present spirit of God. Elisha might have pleaded for a new and different mantle. The sheepskin or goat-

skin mantle was good enough for, and even fitted to the prophet of the wilderness and the mountain and desert and the cave, but not for him. His office would be in the city of Samaria, and not in the caves along the brook Cherith. He must stand in high social rank, and hence not the old mantle, but a broadcloth mantle. Not so with Elisha. He took up the mantle which fell from Elijah. So must we use the Bible. So must we bow to the Holy Spirit. So must we show the power of the godly life. These symbolize to us all power. They smite every Jordan. We must use them for our times and our Jordans. To be as wise and good as our fathers were we must be wiser and better than our fathers were. We must bear their mantles with a courage for our times, a simplicity for our times, with the spirit for our times. There must be the spirit of consecration for our days and our Jordans. Our fathers joyed at the promises of their children. They expected us to be better than they. They gave to us a heritage of their times with their prayers, and thought, and hope for the future. We shall lay our times into the lap of those who are appointed to come after us.

"Here once again were gathered the fathers—the Kumlers, Spayth, Rhinehart, Hiestand, Brown, Erb, Russel, Edwards, Glossbrenner, Davis; and here came such as Montgomery, Vandemark, Hanby, and others like unto them. They have all crossed the last Jordan. By and by we shall lay down our mantles beyond the last river and overtake the illustrious ones in that better country where they have gathered and where they have entered into rest. May the mantles of the fathers fall upon us, and a double portion of their spirit be ours. May we take up the mantles of the ascended Elijahs and with them smite the waters."

Bishop Hott's conference sermons always had great appropriateness. They were burning gospel messages, full of the marrow of truth and inspiration, and they

invariably found a responsive chord in the hearts of ministers and laymen alike. Several specimens of sermons of this character are preserved in the conference minutes, and are models of excellence in thought, illustration, and language. These are all worthy of publication in permanent form, but the limits of this volume preclude the introduction here of more than one of these discourses. This one was delivered at the Auglaize Conference, at Decatur, Indiana, in 1897. It was preached without manuscript, as the bishop's custom was, and was secured by a stenographer, under the direction of the enterprising conference secretary, the Rev. J. W. Lower. The theme and message are such as to make this truly a typical conference sermon.

*"The Law and Motive of Christian Service.*

"'Servants for Jesus' sake' (II. Corinthians 4:5).

"The whole of the verse reads: 'For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.' The text suggests two lines of observation: First, the great purpose of the Christian life. No life can attain to the loftiest plane of a true life which has not a supreme purpose—a great aim. An aimless life, a life without a purpose, must always fall far short of the possibilities of a God-made man or woman. The plane and purpose of a Christian life in the text is set forth in two words, 'Your servants'; it sets forth therefore the ideal of the Christian life, not only for ministers of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but other sincere followers of Jesus. This plan of life is suggested to us very readily and naturally by the universal law of ministry and service which has control and dominion over all things so far as we know in all worlds. The earth was made for service and abides in its strength and glory through the passing ages as the servant of man. The sea, with

its mighty deep and vast bosom, is one great servant of all about it. Every beast that walks upon the face of the earth, every bird that tunes its notes to music sweet, only serves. The sun that shines far away in the heavens shines not for its own glory and for its own adornment, but that it may carry its benediction around the globe and to other worlds; that it may go this morning into every church, into every home where afflicted mothers or fathers may not find way to the sanctuary of God; that it may scatter the darkness and night of our world. All those stars that light the heavens by night only shine to serve. It were a strange thing if man were an exception to this universal law, were it not? God himself exists to serve. I know there was an old theology that we were taught, some of us, when we were children, that God existed only for his own infinite glory. He is not merely a great egotist. That was the first conception of God that was taught to some of us, but that is not the conception of God that Christianity holds to-day. It is not the true conception of Jesus Christ that Christianity gives to the world. No! God is love, and lives to serve, always serves. God exists to-day to pour his benediction upon every son and daughter of the race. There is somewhere, I don't recall just now where, a picture, painted by a modern artist, of Christ just in the act of pronouncing on the world his curse for the world having rejected him; it is a marvelous painting, but there is no such Christ; there is no such God; it is false to the core.

"This life of service, to the Christian, is very much more fully brought to us in the divine commandments. In the very first history we have of the race, God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. A long time ago God said: 'Choose you this day whom ye will serve.' 'Love the Lord and serve him.' 'In honor serving one another.' That is the New

Testament idea. The last final echo of God's infinite, eternal benediction is, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'; that is law and God, that is Christianity. This is suggested to us and enforced by the whole example of Jesus Christ. The whole life of Christ is a life of service from the first to the last. He never met a man with a load on his shoulder that he didn't take it upon his own if the man would allow it. Jesus Christ never met a woman with a great sorrow in her heart that he didn't take that sorrow out of her heart and lay it on his own if she would allow him to do it. From the morning of his early life to the last day, the whole life of Jesus was one of ministry. In reading that marvelous book, 'Ben Hur,' you surely do not forget where they are starting with Ben Hur as a slave through the pressing crowd to the ship where he is to become a galley-slave. As the crowds press by him there comes a lad, a boy pressing through the crowd with a cup of cold water. You said, 'That is Jesus, son of Mary.' It is a representation of the Master, always the life of Jesus.

"Growing toward the close of that life that picture stands out more and more prominent. In company with the disciples on the way to Jerusalem, in the crowd a woman comes; in either hand she holds the hand of a darling boy—two of the disciples of Christ. She says to the Master, 'I want to make a request of you; grant thou that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in the kingdom.' He is on his way to Calvary, and the answer comes, 'Can they drink of the cup which I am to drink?' They don't understand it and they say, 'We can,' and, turning to them, he says, 'You shall indeed drink of the cup, but to sit on my right hand or my left hand it is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.' And then he goes on to say: 'Whosoever will be chief among you or



great among you let him be your minister. But who-soever will be greatest among you let him be a bond slave; let him be a servant of all.' That is the doctrine of Christ. Go a little further over on the southwestern side of the city, where the Savior is with his disciples before he goes down to the garden of Gethsemane, as he goes over to eat the passover with the disciples, to the house of some stranger. I wonder whose house it was. I wish I knew. I tramped around Jerusalem to see where he took his last night's supper with the disciples, and I said, 'I wish I knew where it was that he did eat with the disciples.' It is the good man's house, the house of the good man and the Savior is in the home of 'the good man of the house,' and the disciples are gathered about him and there is a dispute among them as to who shall be the greatest. He says to them, 'I, your Lord and Master, am among you as one who serves.' And then he girded himself with a towel and took a basin around to one disciple and to another and washed their feet and then completed by wiping their feet with his own hands, and he says, 'If I your Lord and Master do the most menial things for you, how ought you not to wash one another's feet.' Oh! this proud heart of mine, learn a lesson from my Lord and Master. That is the great lesson that it presents to us; and then I go so far as to say that is the lesson that is given up so thoroughly and completely that we now fully recognize it as the great and vast truth of Christianity. We may be selfish and proud, we may want to be ministers, but Jesus Christ standing there says, 'The Son of man comes not to be ministered to, but to minister and give his life a ransom for many.'

"Secondly, the text suggests the supreme motive of the Christian life.

"Every life must have a great motive; every true life must have a supreme inspiration. Many a man is a weak man because he is not an inspired man, be-



cause he has not a motive-propelling power. The apostle puts it here in three words, 'For Jesus' sake.' That, he says, is the supreme motive in Christian service; I like that theology. Emerson said this, 'If you would elevate me you must get above me.' I think that is very plainly and simply said. If you would elevate me you must get above me. If man is out in the dark he is not inspired to the plane of service; that elevation and inspiration may be accomplished—must be accomplished outside and above himself. It is the tragedy of the cross; it is the vision of the face of the Savior; it is the lesson of God Almighty; the apostle puts it, 'For Jesus' sake.' That is not for our own aggrandizement, not for our own development; that may be a very beautiful motive, for we are creatures that must cultivate ourselves. Not for the beneficial purpose upon society. Great-hearted philanthropy is to be commended, but it is far short of that beautiful, inspiring motive which is presented in the words of the apostle, 'For the sake of Jesus'; that is to say, that we do something for some one which we would not do for that one except for our regard for another.

"God has shown us this principle. You have read how the Lord blessed the house of the Egyptian, Potiphar, for Joseph's sake. You remember how the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom because of the ark of the covenant. Then act under this great law of substitution. A man comes to your house and he would like to be entertained by you. You never saw him, but you know United Brethren ministers to be good people, and you take him in. A man comes to your house and wants entertainment over the Sabbath. He says, 'Once, away back in Pennsylvania, when I was a boy, your father and I used to know each other; we were boys together; went to school together.' You take the stranger into the house and give him the best meal and bed you can give him. Why? Because of

your father's love and your father's fellowship with him. He was my father's friend—it is for father's sake. We have one of the most beautiful stories in all literature, the story of David and Jonathan. Jonathan knew that David had taken the kingdom from him. He didn't object, because the Father had given him it, but he says, 'Remember me when you come on your throne.' When Jonathan and Saul were slain in battle David went and gathered the bodies and buried them. Twenty long years passed, when he removed his throne up to Jerusalem; you remember the last parting of Jonathan—'When you come on your throne remember me.' David cast his eyes round about him and said, 'Is there any left yet of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for the sake of Jonathan?' and they said, 'There is one Ziba, a servant of the house of Saul, that might remember him'; and they called him in and he said, 'Are you a servant of the house of Saul?' and he said, 'I am'; and David said, 'Is there any left of the house of Jonathan or the house of Saul, that I may show him favor for Jonathan's sake?' and he said: 'There is one, and he was a boy about two years old on the day his father Jonathan was slain in battle. His nurse ran away with him, let him fall, and broke both his feet. He is the son of Jonathan.' And David said, 'Go bring him.' I think I can see Mephibosheth crawling on his knees, and David must have seen something of the likeness of his dear friend Jonathan as he looked in his face. David said, 'Let all the private lands of Saul be given him, but let him sit at my table'; and as long as David kept his palace that crippled man sat at the table of David for Jonathan's sake. You and I were crippled in the race, crippled in battle, crippled in the awful conflict, but to-day we sit at the table of our Lord and King, for Jesus' sake.

"So we have the application of this great law. We serve our fellow-man as we would not serve our fellow-

man save because of our relation to and regard for Jesus Christ. You have read probably the story of an old monk who was seen on his way to a place of worship one morning with a pitcher of water in one hand and a fagot of fire in the other. Some one asked him what he meant, and he answered, 'With this fagot I would burn up heaven, with this water I would put out the fires of hell, that I might serve only for the sake of my blessed loving Christ.' That is the loftiest conception of the apostle in these words, 'For Jesus' sake.'

"That is so, first, because of what Jesus is, because of what Jesus suffered, and because of what Jesus does. Because of these things I serve my fellow-man. That is the subjective form of it. On the other hand, in order that there may be the more perfect manifestation and revelation of Jesus Christ to the world. Therefore I serve in order that Christ be made known to the world. There is a very great desire upon the part of a man who is a Christian that Christ shall be understood by the world—by men by whom he has never been understood. I have heard in the last year of men who have been hardened under the influence of evil, that they have stood up in great meetings and cursed the name of Jesus Christ. Why? Because Christ was by them totally misunderstood. No man who understands Christ, no man who understands his character, no man who understands the spirit of Christianity, in his sober senses can do other than bless Christ. Therefore the longing of my heart is that they might know Jesus. I know something of him. Years ago I took my little children,—they were just little girls growing up like olive plants about my house,—I took them hundreds of miles over to my own father's house that they might be there two or three months to be with my father, that they might know my father, that they might learn my father. They often heard me tell sweet stories about his life as it touched my life when I was a little boy.

I wanted those daughters of mine to know what a dear father he was; what a great heart he had; what a sweet spirit he had; what he bore to the world; what a character of sunlight and beauty he lived. As I think now about it, it is the joy of my heart that my own darling children in the home of my father learned to know him; and afterwards, when one of them grew to womanhood she painted me one of the most beautiful life-size portraits of my father; she caught his sweet spirit and life. I am a thousandfold more anxious that those children shall know Christ. I am a thousandfold more anxious that the children all about me shall know Christ and understand his life and character; that is why I serve; but for that, for the service of my Lord Jesus Christ, I should to-day close this service, close my Bible, and go home and never preach another sermon.

"Second, in order that this life and character of our Lord Jesus Christ may be reproduced in the world. Oh, that is the one longing of the heart of the true preacher, that is the one supreme longing of the heart of every true disciple of Christ. May I say to you in that thought Christianity is unlike every other religion of the world? Some of you attended the Congress of Religions in Chicago; you must have sat there and heard those Hindoo priests' beautiful theories. I heard one of them preach regeneration there, self-regeneration of the soul; he said, 'This is Hindooism,' and pointing to the sins of Christian nations said, 'This is Christianity'; I said, 'How false you are, how untrue!' I am willing to take and compare Hindoo ideals with Christian ideals; I am ready to compare Christian ideals with all the religions of the world. Christ never said, 'This is true and that is true; here is the truth'; he said, 'I am the truth; judge my gospel by me.' That is a challenge. Jesus stood up before every struggling religion of the world and said, 'I am the way, the

truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.' What Christianity has undertaken to do from that day till now is the incarnation of his life in the lives of men. It is for this cause that we serve, and this attainment for Jesus is an inspiration.

"What is the result of this long service for Jesus' sake? If our life of service as Christians is placed under this law of love and is rendered for Jesus' sake, labor in the service will be made easy. You ask the question very naturally, 'Is Christian service hard?' Yes. No. It depends altogether on how you view it. You ask that man who loves his wife if toil at the bank or on the farm, or toil here or toil there, is hard for him. He says: 'Were you never married? Had you never a wife, and have you no children?' To that man whose heart is inspired by love for a sweet home, whose heart is inspired by love for a dear wife, whose heart is inspired by sweet ministrings of little children which God has sent as angels of light around his home, to that man the labor of life is easy. A great deal of labor is to be done in the Christian service; there is a great deal of labor that is not congenial to the natural man. A great many people come into church to-day, about the same as a person who is sick goes to the hospital; they want the preacher to come to visit them once or twice a month, and if they see him go to the house of Mrs. Jones oftener than to their own, then they think, 'I'll just call for my letter.' May the Lord have mercy on the man and woman who so construe the life of service! You ought to be able in your church relations not only to carry your own burdens, but those of others. I read a little while ago a little incident. I don't know whether it was historically true, but it was in the spirit true. Some little boys in a charity house in London were sitting around the table, usually in charge of a man. Sometimes they were alone at the table, when one of the little boys invoked the blessing.

They all bowed their heads and he said, 'Lord Jesus, be thou with us this night and bless what thou hast provided. Amen.' And they all said, 'Amen.' One little boy who had often heard that grace given before said, 'I wonder why Jesus never comes here; we often ask him to come.' And another little boy said, 'I suppose the reason he does not come is because he has not any place.' Another little fellow said, 'If that is so, we will make a place for him,' and they had another place prepared, and then went along eating their meal and forgot what they had done, when an old laboring man, on his way home, tired and almost sick, and knowing the character of the house, knocked at the door and asked if he could get a little something to eat; and one of the boys said, 'I suppose Jesus is busy to-night and has sent this man.' Then they said, 'We have been looking for Jesus and he didn't come, and we suppose he sent you.' And they had him sit down at the table and eat their soup with them. He represented Jesus to them. My brother, one of you may pick up a little boy on the street and get him into Sabbath school; he represents Jesus. And you may see Jesus in that poor little girl whose father is a drunkard and whose mother has the weight of a dozen lives on her broken heart. All service will be sweet that you do for the church because of Christ. In all these we would see the face of the Savior; you say, 'Jesus represents this,' and labor is easy.

"When this life of service is put under the law of love for Jesus' sake, sacrifice will be made light. The first law of the Christian life is sacrifice. Christ said, 'If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself.' You don't want self-denial; you want self-aggrandizement. I do, in my natural condition, but Jesus Christ put it down in a commandment, and said, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.' It is the sweetest path any man ever tried to walk on—the walk



of self-denial. You and your wife have had a little disagreement; you were going to have a friend spend a week or two with you, and you were talking about it and which room you would let that person occupy; you wanted him to occupy one room and possibly your wife wanted to give your room up to him. Or it was about the purchase of a suite of furniture; you wanted to get one kind and she wanted another; she wanted to get one kind of piano and you wanted another kind. There was no bad feeling. You talk to the children, and get one of the boys on your side, and then you get another, and then you get the girls, and finally you get all the children on your side as to which room you would have and what you would do, and you set a time that you will put it to a vote in the evening, and then you will talk it over and that night you are going to settle it; and as you begin to talk you look into the face of your wife, and you remember how loyal and true she has stood by you through the long years of your life, and you remember how she nursed you while you were sick and brought you back to life and health, and you remember how you buried your little girl, and how your heart was broken and you had no more courage, and she came and kissed you and helped you out of your sorrow when your heart was all broken, and you think what a broken reed you were. You notice what a slender frame she has and what a sickly woman she is, and you know what a great heart she has, and when she looks into your eyes with eyes of love as you are just getting ready to discuss it, you say, 'My darling, you can fix it just the way you want it; I would like for you to have it just the way you want it'; and the children were all on your side, and they wondered, but you were happy as an angel. This is an illustration of self-denial. O thou Christ, thou perfect pattern, teach us how sweet it is to deny ourselves!

"It is more than twenty years now since a widowed



mother had two sons in college; they were preparing themselves for life work. She made every sacrifice and saved every dime and dollar she could, because she wasn't rich, and she wanted to keep them in college. One day the news came home in a letter that the two boys had both resolved to give themselves to the ministry of the gospel. When that mother read those lines she had to brush the tears out of her eyes, and she said, 'How happy I am!' Years went on, and news came home that they had both given themselves to foreign missionary work, and would go to a foreign field to labor. That mother shed tears that day, and she said, 'My boys in a foreign field!' She had imagined them in some fine church at home, but the thought that they should go far away into fields so wide, where the night was so dark—she couldn't endure it. She wrote against it, but they wrote kindly but very firmly; at last she just had to give up. They went down to the steamer with half a dozen more also going to a foreign field. She went on board that great steamer, and often kissed them, because it would be a long, long time before she would ever see them again, but the time was quickly gone and she had to go off on the plank. She kissed them again and again, and the plank was taken in and she could only signal to the boys on the upper deck, and by signal they could recognize each other to the last. The old vessel began to swing and the distance between the shore and the vessel to widen, and great tears ran down the boys' cheeks as she threw kisses at them. They were passing farther and farther away, until at last their faces began to mingle in the crowd and she could not tell them one from another, and as the old vessel went out on the mighty deep the mother's heart sank like lead and she turned away from the vessel and laid her hand on her heart and turned her face up to the sky and said, 'Jesus, Jesus, I give these boys up for thee'; and as she stood there, there came

into her heart a peace, a light like that of those around the throne.

"The sweetest experience you and I have ever had is that of giving up something for Jesus. It makes a life beautiful; it ennobles the person; it gives sweetness and tenderness to our lives; it attaches others to it in all relations of life. After all, there is not anything that draws us to another like service. I take my shoes off my feet to that woman who gives her life to her child, or to the men who gave their lives in foreign fields in hard service, in the gospel ministry, in statesmanship, and in the world; in every place that character of service rises above all others. There is something beautiful in the whole life of Jesus; there is something beautiful in his teachings; but the one thing to-day that gives Jesus Christ the masterful character is that he died for the world.

"May God grant that your life and mine may be wrought out into the beautiful and blessed inspiration of these words, 'For Jesus' sake.'"

Bishop Hott's last sermon was preached in the Oak Street United Brethren Church, Dayton, Ohio. Text, Colossians 1:18. The theme was, "Christ Our Head." The analysis was clear and the conclusion most practical and earnest, a plea to the church to be unswerving in fidelity to Jesus our loving Head. While the sermon had strong elements, it, however, lacked in his old-time warmth, ability, and enthusiasm. The last sermon he attempted to prepare was on that immortal text, John 3:16. Thus his mind to the last held firmly to these great central themes of the gospel. In Christ alone he trusted and in him he had a sure and steadfast hope "entering into that which is within the veil."

The sources of his power as a preacher were his simple faith in God and his clear insight into spiritual realities. He lived with God, and his ministry was God-honored. Though dead he yet speaketh.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL LIFE.

NOWHERE was Bishop Hott more at home than when at home. His home was his citadel. It was his joy and his comfort. Here all care was laid aside, and he entered with all his earnest soul into the life of his wife and children. He never carried life's shadows and burdens across the threshold of his home. Light and brightness filled the whole horizon of his domestic life.

He greatly enjoyed being with his family, joining with them in conversation, singing, and reading. His sunny hopefulness and playful humor made him most companionable in all these things. The last time his voice rose in song was a few weeks before his death. His daughter, Mrs. Huber, sang for him with the piano, "Rocked in the cradle of the deep." It was one of his favorite hymns, and he joined in parts of it with a sweet and genuine enthusiasm.

Notwithstanding his exceptionally busy life, he found time for mingling with his children. He was their favorite companion, and most loved and trusted counselor. I do not know that I ever knew a husband more devoted to his wife, or a father more affectionate toward his children than was he; and I know, too, that devotion and affection could hardly have been more cordially reciprocated than was his. In their home, love was mutual, a necessary condition to a truly happy home.

It is said that the home of Spurgeon could be described by only one word—beautiful. Admitted as I was to the inner circle of Bishop Hott's home life,





BISHOP HOPKIN'S WILLIAM STREET HOME, DAYTON, OHIO.

through a period of years, I must say that I know of no single word that so adequately describes it. It is descriptive not only of the character and relationships of father, mother, and children, but of the sacred place where they dwelt. The home was beautiful, not the house in which they lived so much, but the atmosphere, taste, refinement, orderly and modest furnishings, and supreme content, the things which really make an ideal home.

For one who was away from home so much, who traveled so extensively, separation from his family was a great cross and trial. But after a week, month, or months of absence, how joyous were the reunions, and how sweet the renewed fellowships!

Bishop Hott's ideals for home life were high, especially the Christian home. His conceptions of the relations and privileges of parents and children were of the most exalted type. These often found expression in his sermons and in his editorial and other writings. Once writing of "The Home School," after speaking of other and important educational agencies, he said, "There is another school, mightier than these. It is that which is found in every home." Then speaking of the possibilities of home training and usefulness, he urged that there be great carefulness in at least six essentials:

1. There ought to be greater familiarity between parents and children than there is in the great majority of the homes. The home school is one of love.
2. Parents should take more interest in conversation upon subjects that interest the young.
3. Parents should always show to their children that they expect them to pursue paths of nobleness in life and character. It is a death-blow when a father or mother tells a son or daughter that he or she is of no account, and will never come to any good end.
4. Let children be instructed more, and not driven

and scolded. It is murder to manhood and womanhood to drive children here and there as cattle are driven.

5. Give the home the light and blessing of good books and good periodical literature.

6. Let God's Word be read daily in every home, and its teachings be briefly commented upon in connection with the family worship.

These wise directions always found forceful illustration in the bishop's own home. His teaching in these respects was not a matter of theory and precept, but of practice.

In speaking of his happy home life, I cannot refrain from mentioning the helpful experiences I have had in connection with family worship where he was the leader. Of course, his home always had a family altar. Here parents and children daily and joyfully lifted their hearts to God in devout prayer. But I have reference to his delightful way of conducting the family devotions where he lodged during conferences, and at other times where I have been privileged to be with him. His reading of the Scriptures was usually accompanied with pointed and suggestive and instructive exposition. His pertinent and fresh comments were always a means of grace. Then, his prayers were likewise full of that simple, tender supplication which always seemed to be born of close fellowship with the Master. While the very tone and confidence of the prayer were suggestive of gracious familiarity with him, there was never the slightest irreverence in his address to the divine Lord. I have been greatly moved under his public prayers, but some way it always seemed to me that there was a spontaneity and beauty about his prayers in the family that gave them unusual power. He was even a greater man in prayer than he was in preaching. Many are the families that have had a conscious lifting heavenward by his pres-



ence and prayers as they gathered about the hallowed home altar.

He was noted for his almost boundless hospitality. It used to be said that he and his wife took charge of everybody. In this, reference was had to their characteristic generosity in entertaining people from different parts of the Church, especially those visiting the Publishing House. They always had a spare bed, and a place about their ample board for a friend or a stranger, all in keeping with the free and hospitable home of their early life. How much in contrast this is with much of our present life where the scriptural injunction to practice hospitality has become almost a dead letter!

In his general social life Bishop Hott was rather a unique character. His ease and grace on all occasions were notable. He was a gentleman of the old school of manners, dignified, but always kind and courteous. His friendship and geniality were proverbial. He could easily adapt himself to his surroundings. If he were with the cultured, lovers of art and music, he was happily at home with them, for his own broad culture and his keen sense of the beautiful in the wide realm of art made him at once an interested and sympathetic companion. If he were in the gardens, parks, or mountains, he was at home there, for he never forgot the "native hills and valleys of the Old Dominion."

As it was with Beecher, so it was with this man. His private conversations were full of the wit and wisdom which marked his public addresses, and each in its own appropriate place. Sometimes in private he would break out into a discourse equal to any he could deliver in public. His mind was always full until it overflowed in this way, after which he needed an entire change of thought, and took relief in humor and harmless nonsense. Sometimes his humor bubbled over on going into the home where entertained after his great-

est intellectual efforts. His power of unpremeditated speech, both private and public, was often a surprise to his friends.

In his travels Bishop Hott had the excellent Christian habit of conversation with strangers—a habit well suited to foster a broad human sympathy. Then, too, he was very happy in improving such impromptu conversations in speaking a modest word for righteousness and the Righteous One, and that with no air of preaching. In this way, too, he gathered many of his best illustrations for preaching.

Few men have had so many friends as this itinerant preacher, for few have known so well as he how to improve opportunities for making and retaining them. There was a charm about his friendship which was as transparent and sincere as it was rare. His very nature overflowed with friendliness, which found glad expression in innumerable ways. He ever delighted to show it toward the needy, whether it was their souls, minds, or bodies that were in want. If it was the soul that was hungry and lost, he not only knew how to lead it to salvation, but was never happier than when engaged in this highest ministry of brotherly kindness. If the mind was lacking in culture and power, and there was a thirst for these things, he rejoiced to show the way to the abundant fountains of supply. If the body was sick and suffering, his friendship assumed a very practical form. So in the broad sympathies of his being and in the serious activities of his life he was dominated by the Christlike spirit of friendship and helpfulness.

His friendship for his friends, those to whom he was closely related by the ties of blood and association, was true and steadfast. He delighted in them, not for what he could get from them, but for what he might contribute to their good and joy. It is friendship of this generous sort that forgets self and finds the highest

satisfaction in the happiness of others. He found a peculiar delight in the presence of his friends in his home, in taking a walk or a drive together, or in sharing with them uplifting thoughts and experiences, or the exquisite raptures of communion with nature. His friendship was of this winsome, entertaining, cheerful type. It had in it also the element of faithfulness. A friend who knew him intimately for years says: "His loyalty to a friend could never be shaken. Coolness or ingratitude or infidelity on the part of a friend wounded him to the core, but could not change his attitude toward that friend. This was one of the surprising excellencies of his character."

Bishop Hott's life and character had a remarkably bright, sunny side. Wherever he went he was a messenger of good cheer. He had a merry heart, which the wise proverb-writer says "doeth good like a medicine." I do not remember to have seen him at any time during my long and intimate acquaintance with him, when this quality seemed to be absent from him. He even knew how to take a cheerful view of serious things. He had perplexities, and met with opposition, but he did not let these things "turn" the milk of human kindness within him. He could be cheerful and blithesome without being flippant or coarse. He enjoyed a good story, and could tell one. Many a time have I known him to turn from his desk to tell an amusing story, or to speak of some ludicrous remark or episode, and even when a joke was told at his expense, to laugh as heartily as if some one else had been the butt of it. No one who ever heard him laugh heartily, as he often did when something especially pleased him, will ever forget it.

He had a keen sense of humor. This gave to his writings a peculiar brightness and fascination, to his sermons and lectures not only brilliancy, but dramatic interest as well, and to his social conversation a charm

and beauty that ever made it entertaining and pleasing. In the domestic and social circle and about the dinner-table he was a very prince among entertainers. And, in all his sallies of wit, in all the stories he told, in all the riddles he propounded, there was never the slightest approach to anything irreverent or undignified, anything unworthy a gentleman and a Christian. To be able to say this in truth is to be able to pay him one of the highest of compliments. He was one of the cleanest Christian men I have ever known. He was a man whose personal purity in any sense I never heard called in question.

There is a little story which the bishop used to tell, and which he enjoyed, though, in a sense, it contained a personal criticism. It is connected with the first session of Oregon Conference at which he presided, in 1889. The conference there had been greatly reduced by the withdrawal of the radicals. Bishop Castle was present. In view of the few working members the bishops constituted themselves a committee to examine some of the unordained preachers. They submitted a list of questions in writing. One question was, "What do you consider good preaching?" To this one of the members of the class answered, "Think like Bishop Weaver, place your right hand to your right ear like Bishop Castle, open your mouth like Bishop Hott, and holler like the Methodists." Bishop Castle would have refused the answer, but Bishop Hott replied, "Any young man that can answer a question like that, give him 100 per cent."

One side of the bishop's many-sidedness was surely his magnetic, generous, winning social side. This made him the center around which the members of his household revolved in harmonious concert like the planets about the central sun. It made him the joy of happy children, and the one object of fawning delight to his grandchildren, of whom he had seven at the time of

his death. It made him the charmed center on which all eyes were fixed in the social circle. This social instinct and power was one of the gifts with which God had been pleased to endow him, a gift enriched and enlarged by grace, which its possessor learned to use so well in the most kindly and helpful services to fellow-men. The life of our Lord, like this one, teaches us the great mission of social kindness as an agency for doing good.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### AN APPRECIATION.

It has well been said that there are men and classes of men that occupy positions above the common herd. Such a man was Bishop James W. Hott. In nobility and strength of character, generosity and good sense, industry and cheerfulness, he was above the common herd. For one to write of his manifold virtues who long knew and admired him, is to bring to his memory a grateful tribute of appreciation and love. To have thus known him is to cherish and revere the qualities of nobleness and worth which he possessed.

Thus it is that he who has a permanent place in the esteem and affection of his fellowmen leaves memorials to his name more enduring than monuments of brass or stone. The expressions of appreciation which follow are the testimonials of living tablets of this sort. They are the estimates which personal friends put upon the worth and work of a man of towering influence as a preacher and orator, editor and author, and church-leader, after his earthly career is finished. They likewise represent the common judgment of multitudes of others who knew him well. This chapter, therefore, will be in the nature of a memorial to the life assured of this immortality.

When Mr. Hott was only a young preacher in Virginia his brilliant and winning personality made him many friends. Among these was Ephraim Reubush, who attended a revival meeting he held in the autumn of 1863, in which thirty-three persons were converted. His ardent appreciation of the boy preacher was shown





BISHOP HOTT, MOTHER, DAUGHTER, AND GRANDDAUGHTER.





in naming his first-born son for him—James Hott. A sister of Mrs. Ruebush once said to her, "I do not see why you gave the child that name." After hearing Mr. Hott preach, some time after, her criticisms vanished and she said apologetically, "I understand now why you gave him that name."

Mr. Hiram Fries, a school friend and childhood associate of Mr. Hott, says, "He had the same indomitable will and energy when a boy that so distinguished him in later life."

One of the striking facts of Bishop Hott's life is that the friends of his early manhood were his cherished friends through life. C. T. Stearn and A. M. Evers, who became members of Virginia Conference with him in 1862, have both written of their early associate and fellow-laborer, since his death, in terms of warmest appreciation.

Mr. Stearn says: "A feeling of profound sorrow, however not unmixed with sweetest pleasure, comes to me whenever I think of my life-long friend and dear brother who has gone from us, and whose loving presence will never again greet us on this side of the mysterious river."

Mr. Evers says: "Dr. Hott and I entered the ministry about the same time, and were associated in church work for many years. I always considered him talented. His prayers and sermons were soul-inspiring. He was self-made and scholarly, and seems to have died too soon."

The Rev. J. W. Howe, who knew Bishop Hott from his boyhood, and who was a member of Virginia Conference with him, and a fellow-worker there, once said when referring to the bishop's early life and labors, "We had little idea then that we had among us a man of such character and force who would make himself felt in wider circles."

Dr. J. Dickson, who was for twenty-four years one

of the honored bishops of the Church, and who was long and intimately acquainted with James W. Hott in many relations, says of him: "Bishop Hott was in some respects an extraordinary man, and deserves much credit for what he made of himself and the work he did. With his many disadvantages of early life in the way of education he may be called great; that is, great comparatively. Some of the great men of the world have come up in just that way. With a good foundation, the gift of nature, to build on, they have proved prodigies of mental and moral power, and have been useful in their generation.

"My first meeting with Bishop Hott was at the General Conference of 1869. He was, I suppose, then about twenty-five years of age, the youngest member of that body. I do not remember of any special part he took in the deliberations of the conference; and that showed good sense as well as modesty on his part. After the following General Conference I became more intimate with him, officially as well as otherwise. I heard his talks at the annual conferences on the different interests he represented; they were always timely and forcible. I remember well the first visit he made to Upper Wabash Conference. I was sick and could not get out on Sunday morning. The meeting was in the woods, and Hott was put up to preach the conference sermon, and I learned that the people were completely captivated with his effort. In after years when I visited Dayton, Bishop Hott's and Dr. Davis's were my stopping-places. Bishop Hott was a very genial man, no matter where you met him. His children, I thought, always admired him. I am sure they had great reverence and respect for him, and his was a Christian home, in the full sense of the word. That he had his failings is true,—that seems to be the inheritance of all of us,—but that he was a man of ability and good, withal, I think but few who knew him will question."

D. A. Sinclair, the general secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, of Dayton, Ohio, for nearly thirty years, and who knew Bishop Hott well during this long period, especially in his sympathies and work for young men, bears this cordial testimony:

"No words of mine are adequate to express the love and high regard I have had for the late Bishop Hott. He was my companion in travel across the continent, and no man could wish a more helpful, happy, and inspiring associate to journey with. He never failed to give our young men a strong, inspiring message when he addressed our members. His words always brought hope, help, and health to his hearers."

Few men have come nearer to the heart of Bishop Hott than Dr. George M. Mathews, who was for five years his pastor, and who was also intimate with him in other relations. The following is his characterization of the man:

"Bishop Hott was a self-made man, of great force and character, and of unusual power as a leader. He was recognized, both within and without the denomination, as an able preacher, strong writer, efficient presiding officer, and a wholesome counselor. He possessed great heart power, as well as strong mental endowments. His superior natural gifts, enforced by those acquired by life-long, persistent study, put him in the class of leaders in the denomination. He had positive convictions, which gave him recognized leadership. He was kind, amiable, and companionable, always drawing about him warm friends, and casting sunshine upon all with whom he mingled. He was aggressive and progressive, always at the front in every movement and enterprise looking to the good of the Church and the salvation of men. He had a deep and genuine interest in young people, which led him generously to support the Seminary and our colleges. He was always a friend of the Young Men's Christian

Association, and gave his full energies to the support of the young people's movement of our Church. His soul burned for young men and their life-equipment. . . . He knew how to help his pastor in all these things, especially in revivals. I have known him to stand in the pulpit and preach with great ability, self-poise, and eloquence, and the next moment bow at the altar with his open Bible, instructing penitents in the way of life. And, if strong men at the altar were struggling in darkness and doubt, he would encircle them in his arms, and with melted heart and flowing tears actually love them into the kingdom.

"He was an optimist. He was always full of faith, and hope, and sunshine. He preached and lived the gospel of good cheer. He believed in God, and Christ, and heaven, and the Bible, and the church, and the future life, with all its glories and blessedness."

In an official capacity and as a brother man, very intimate relations existed between Dr. W. J. Shuey, so long the United Brethren Publishing Agent, and Bishop Hott. In his address at the bishop's funeral, Dr. Shuey said:

"I never had a brother after the flesh, but Brother Hott came as nearly as the unreality could be. I found him in private life a man of pure thoughts and pure words. I never heard him utter an undignified word; not one unbecoming sentence for a man who was to be himself an example of moral and spiritual purity to others, and a teacher of righteousness of the highest character known to men—a man with a clean heart and clean lips.

"Bishop Hott was a man of wide reading, and therefore had large conceptions of human affairs and of the world's needs. His yearnings were for the redemption of the whole human race. He was a friend and companion of rare affection and firmness. He could be implicitly trusted. His sense of honor was keen and

determined. Gratefulness for kindness shown him was overflowing. Among his latest expressions were those of thankfulness to those who ministered to his needs.

"When his afflictions came, my heart was touched, and as I often visited him and conversed with him from time to time, even unto his latest breath, I could have wept my life away, that he might be spared.

"He lived a strenuous life. I heard one distinguished physician say to him, when he was lamenting the little he had done for men, 'You have done as much in thirty years as Methuselah did in almost a thousand years.' One year of Brother Hott's strenuous life was equal to two of ordinary activity. He died, as we see it, prematurely. We don't understand it; but he has crowded into these years an immense amount of labor in the Master's vineyard, and eternity alone will reveal the magnitude of his influence, of his usefulness, of his effectiveness in molding and fashioning the minds and the hearts of the men and women with whom he had to do.

"I saw him breathe his last breath, and I thought of the little baby lines that our mothers taught us when they laid us to rest:

" 'Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep;  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.' "

Bishops Kephart and Mills, associated with Bishop Hott in the episcopal office, attended the funeral of their deceased brother and fellow-servant in the work of the Church, speaking words of appreciative commendation. Bishop Kephart said: "I have known Bishop Hott for a number of years, and I have always found him to be a warm-hearted, genial, open-hearted friend, **frank and candid**, a true friend, indeed, **one**

whose hands never tired in lending assistance, one whose heart never grew cold, but always in sympathy, and always in love, and abounding cheer; and he had a word of comfort to every individual."

Bishop Mills's tribute was one of keen and discriminating analysis of his associate's salient and distinguishing qualities, of which the following is the outline:

"First, his natural qualities, qualities which came by heritage and environment. Coming from a noble ancestry, coming from a lovely environment amid the valleys and mountains, it could hardly be other than it was. First, he had a productive or fruitful mind. Second, he had a large gift of imagination, seeing things in their ideal relations, clothed with beauty. Third, he had a warm, generous heart. He loved his family. He loved his friends. They all had a refuge in that large heart, so warm, so generous, so full of sympathy and love. Fourth, he had a large gift of language, verbal expression, which enabled him to turn his thoughts, the products of his imagination, the emotions of the heart, into choice sentences and paragraphs. Fifth, his was an enthusiastic nature; that comes from the South. Sixth, he had a large social nature. Lastly, he had a very active temperament.

"Second, his cultivated or acquired qualities were, first, knowledge—a large and varied fund of knowledge; second, a beautiful Christian character, adorned with the graces of the Spirit; third, oratorical habits; fourth, piety, love for God, love for his fellow-men, the product of the work of grace in his own life; fifth, a dignified, courteous demeanor in his relations with others. He had that peculiar dignity which we all remember so well in our associations with Bishop Glossbrenner; with such warmth would he shake hands, with such courtesy he would meet or depart, all clothing in a beautiful way the character of the Christian gentle-



man. And, lastly, a vigorous, strong faith in God, in the gospel, and in his own mission in this life."

Dr. W. M. Bell, whose associations with Bishop Hott were closest in connection with the missionary work of the Church, says: "Bishop Hott leaves behind him influences that he put in motion, which a multitude of hearts will feel for the long years that are to come. He leaves behind him memories that will be cherished in numberless homes, and that will be a blessing to those whom he served and helped in life." What greater tribute than this, that he is destined to live in the multitudes of those whom his life has touched and helped!

The bishop's old conference, the Virginia, has always felt it had a better right to take pride in his name and achievements than any other. Long before his reputation had gone out through the Church, his conference and people among whom he labored with so much zeal and success had learned to appreciate his superior gifts, his warm heart, his spiritual earnestness, his intensely practical common sense, and his tender sympathies, those qualities which made him a valued friend and counselor. At the session of his conference held in Lacey Spring, in March following the bishop's death, it was fitting that the Rev. C. H. Crowell, converted under his ministry, should have been asked to prepare the tender memorial paper that was adopted, of which the following is the opening paragraph: "There are times when we are called upon to perform duties that are both painful and pleasing. The present hour brings us to such a task. The thought that our dear brother and fellow-laborer, Bishop Hott, is dead, almost overwhelms us with grief; but when our thoughts turn to his noble Christian life, so full of faith and good works, and then to the assurance that while he is absent from the body he is present with the Lord, a stream of joy flows into our sorrow-filled hearts

until they overflow with praise and thanksgiving. In his death our loss is great, but to him to die was gain."

The Board of Directors of Union Biblical Seminary, of which Bishop Hott had been a deeply interested and valued member since 1873, adopted the following paper in May, 1902, at its first meeting after his death:

"WHEREAS, The Board of Directors of Union Biblical Seminary has lost one of its most honored and valued members during the past year, in the death of Bishop James W. Hott, D. D., so long officially connected with this institution in different relations, one of its most devoted friends, and a broad-minded and generous supporter of its aims and work; therefore,

"*Resolved*, 1. That, while recognizing the great loss the Church has sustained in his removal from our counsels and fellowship, we would hereby gratefully record our profound appreciation of his distinguished character as a man and leader among us, and of his varied services in different fields, especially in behalf of higher ministerial education in our denomination.

"2. That while we miss his presence and counsels, we shall ever cherish with affectionate gratitude the memory of his noble and useful life."

At the annual meeting of the Church-Erection and Missionary boards, in Harrisburg, Pa., in May, 1902, the following paper, prepared by Dr. W. M. Weekley, was adopted, expressing the feelings of these bodies, of which Bishop Hott had been a member for many years:

"Amid life's duties, we are called upon every little while to lay a loved one away to rest, or to pay a tribute to the memory of some one already gone to the unseen land. For this purpose, we pause a moment to-day. Bishop James W. Hott, long an active, honored member of these boards, quietly fell asleep in death on the 9th day of last January, after a lingering illness of many months. Having been brought up amid the sweet influences of a Christian home and led early to

accept Christ as a personal Savior, he soon yielded to the conviction that preaching the gospel was his life work, and while yet in his teens entered actively upon his chosen profession. As to his ability and success as a preacher, his adaptation to the work of a pastor, his geniality as a presiding officer, his intense zeal as a church worker, his anxious and constant longing for the prosperity of his Zion, his pure home life, we do not say anything. These things are known to the whole Church.

"For four years, from May, 1897, to May, 1901, he was chairman of our executive committee, and during all this time the most cordial relationship existed between him and his fellow-committeemen. It was never too cold or too hot for him to attend our meetings when the business of the boards demanded consideration. He was never too busy or too weary to be present, if by so doing he could aid in solving the problems which so often came before that committee. While he was deeply concerned in all our work, and held strong convictions as to methods and measures, he was, nevertheless, always courteous in his treatment of his collaborators, and ever ready to make concessions in matters of judgment for the sake of harmony and good will. He was a devoted friend of the Church-Erection and Missionary societies, and always stood for what they represent. Early in the history of the former he secured a number of bequests for it, some of which have already materialized. His conception of mission work was broad and generous, and kept him in peculiar touch with the great, onward march of the gospel of Christ.

"But our fellow-toiler is with us no more. His ashes rest in the beautiful Woodland Cemetery, Dayton, Ohio, by the side of the sainted bishops, Weaver and Edwards, and many others who wrought so well in the Church; but his soul rests with God. The cares and

toils and faith-struggles of a busy life are all over and past.

"Though in heaven, he is still our brother, and no doubt as deeply concerned in us and for the causes we represent as he ever was when with us in his bodily presence. We extend to his bereft family our sincerest sympathy, and pray that where the shadows have fallen the light may also shine."

Iowa Conference, at its session in March, 1902, whose superintendent Bishop Hott was, held an appreciative service in his memory, at which a memorial paper by the Rev. E. Harper, who was present at the bishop's ordination, at Boonsboro, Md., in 1864, was adopted. Other conferences where the bishop had presided, and where he was held in the highest esteem, gave similar expressions of their appreciation of his character and eminent public services.

The woman's missionary work of the Church had in Bishop Hott an ardent friend and supporter. After his death the *Woman's Evangel* gave this grateful and well-merited tribute: "The Woman's Missionary Association, which has received so many kind ministries from our much-esteemed Bishop Hott, will feel keenly his departure. He had so long been a resident of Dayton, and for so many years a cheerful toiler in the United Brethren Publishing House, after that a habitual visitor as he met the different boards, and kindly responded to calls for consultation from us, that now that his voice is forever hushed there is a loneliness in these halls that is felt and commented upon by those remaining. Because of the burning summer heat many a shock has been gathered in early autumn."

The religious and secular press of the country was likewise generous in the encomiums accorded Bishop Hott, only a few of which can find room here.

The *Religious Telescope* says: "Words cannot express our sense of loss to the Church and his district

by his premature death. He fell in the midst of his usefulness, in the prime of his life; but he has gone from his sufferings to be crowned in heaven. He rests in peace. Let his example of ceaseless and joyous toil for the Master inspire us who survive him to a higher consecration and better service for Christ and the Church."

Bishop Hott having been so long the editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and afterwards one of its most popular contributors, was well known to the religious editors of the country. Their notices of his death are, therefore, in the nature of personal testimonials of his widely-recognized abilities.

The *Western Christian Advocate*, of Cincinnati, says: "He was an indefatigable worker, and he aged prematurely under excessive burdens of toil and responsibility. In the pulpit and on the platform he was a recognized force, while as a writer he made a strong impression on his denomination."

The editor of the *Evangelical*, of Harrisburg, Pa., Dr. H. B. Hartzler, testifies: "Bishop Hott, in character and service, was an honor to the Church he so faithfully and effectively served, and his precious memory is a heritage to be long and tenderly cherished. We met the departed bishop only once, but as a fellow-editor we knew and loved him as a friend for many years, and as a friend we mourn his departure."

The *Daily Journal* of Dayton, Ohio, where the bishop was so well known, without aiming to be invidious in comparisons, expresses itself thus: "Bishop Hott was a towering figure in the United Brethren Church. He was probably its best known bishop, and also had a wider acquaintance among other denominations than his fellow-bishops."

Dr. J. B. Kanaga, in a "friend's tribute," in the *Evangelical Messenger*, of Cleveland, Ohio, cordially writes: "The lately deceased Bishop Hott was a man

of such broad and generous sympathies as to be worthy of a tribute from friends and brethren of other denominations. As a preacher he was perhaps more widely known than any other man in his denomination. On many great occasions other churches sought his services both for lectures and sermons. His polish and eloquence and catholic spirit made him deservedly popular."

The late Dr. William Beardshear, one of Bishop Hott's most devoted friends, and whose strenuous life closed much as the bishop's did, in response to a request for some words for this appreciation, said: "It will give me unfeigned pleasure to write something regarding Bishop Hott. I shall not be able to do it for the next month or so, as I am just home from a protracted absence, with a good deal of work on hand. Success to you in this great and commendable undertaking." But before the opportunity came to write the promised appreciation his own fatal illness came, and the noble-souled, broad-minded Beardshear had finished his laborious career and had gone to his reward and crown.

These generous words of appreciation are not without their deep significance. They are the warm and willing expressions of living fellow-men about a fellow-man and a fellow-toiler, deceased. They tell of virtues recognized, of character and usefulness attained, and of enduring laurels won, as well as of a wide and profound sense of loss felt. This is the grandest possible monument—that reared in the affections and lives of grateful men and women.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONCLUSION.

THE universal and warm expressions of esteem and sorrow which the death of Bishop Hott called forth from every part of the Church, and from without the denomination as well, are sufficient to indicate something of the strength of his character, and of his power to impress himself upon the lives and affections of his fellow-men. It is safe to say that few men, if any, have exerted a wider influence upon the progress of the Church with which he was identified and its institutions, during his public life, within the past thirty years, than did James W. Hott. During this period the Church of the United Brethren in Christ not only doubled its membership, but its power and efficiency were increased many times over, as an agency for the intellectual, moral, and spiritual welfare of the world. All the general enterprises and institutions which now distinguish the denomination have grown from the stage of small things to their present magnitude and commanding influence within the generation of his public career. The mere statement of these facts is sufficient to impress us with our indebtedness to wise, courageous, and loyal leaders for the substantial advances of this period.

It may be claimed by some that others have done more to promote particular features or departments of the Church's life than did this man, worthy as he is of recognition; but who, in a general way, has given more effective aid to all the aggressive movements of the time than did he? Who did more to prepare the way



for the Church expansion that so marked recent years than did he? Who has contributed more helpfully to the enlarged literary spirit of the denomination by the contributions of his own pen than he? Who has exerted a more permanent influence on the thinking of the ministry and on the general progress of the Church and the age than did he? Those who have been contemporary with him in leadership and labor may have excelled in specialization of effort and achievement, but no one surely exhibited greater interest, a broader sympathy, or a more capable helpfulness in all departments embraced in the Church's varied work.

But he was more than a broad-minded, aggressive churchman. His kinship with humanity was one of his marked characteristics. This gave him a ready and strong grasp on world-wide problems and movements relating to human progress and betterment. This, likewise, led him into the closest fellowship with other religious denominations, and to give his active support to the great reform and evangelistic efforts of his day. He did not hesitate to identify himself with any "cause that needs assistance," nor to oppose "the wrongs that need resistance," whether political or ecclesiastical, social or industrial. There was as much versatility in his relations with worthy causes, and his efforts on their behalf, as there was in his thinking, and speaking, and writing. While others wrought well in their own distinctive spheres, Bishop Hott, as has been said of another, plowed and sowed, and lived to see harvesting in every field. The life of such a man, in his country or in his church, is the life of the epoch in which he has lived. The story of a successful general is the story of his successful campaigns.

The history of Bishop Hott as it has been sketched shows that he was an unsparing worker. The aim has been to present him, not so much as a genius or hero, but as a worker. He had a marvelous capacity for

work. He always worked with remarkable ease, and yet with an intensity that could not fail to be a heavy drain upon his vital forces of body, mind, and heart. He did not have a large or a strong body, but his energy scarcely knew any bounds, so that the amount of work he was able to do, and do well, was a marvel to all who knew him.

He had not the advantages of collegiate training. Entering the active ministry when less than seventeen years of age, his reading and study, which gave him his well-informed and well-disciplined mind, were carried on with scrupulous diligence and persistency through a period of many years, while at the same time meeting successfully his manifold duties in various relations. He was such a diligent student of men and of books that early in life he gained wide recognition for his scholarly habits and attainments. He was an early riser all his life, using early and late hours in enlarging his resources of information and learning. His acquaintance with the world's best literature, with the different schools of philosophy and theological thought, together with the facility he acquired in using the funds of knowledge gathered, always astonished and pleased his friends. Though he never matriculated as a student, he attended classes in Greek and theology in Union Biblical Seminary for a time after he became editor of the *Religious Telescope*. Later he studied German, and became so proficient in the use of the language that he was able to make considerable use of it in a colloquial way. His studious habits were quite remarkable for one who had led such a busy life. To make these varied acquisitions meant years of almost incessant labor and study. It is not strange, therefore, that his vital powers should have become exhausted in the midst of his greatest usefulness, and at the height of his influence, and that his career should have suddenly been brought to a close at so early an age.

How much he lived and how well he wrought in forty busy years! Those not familiar with his active life can little appreciate the amount of work he really did, and with what jealousy almost every hour of time was redeemed. Much of his best work was done while riding on trains in his extensive travels—reading books and magazines, writing editorials, and preparing sermons and addresses for special occasions.

All this meant laborious travel and ceaseless tension. Such a life should have had frequent seasons of prolonged relaxation. Alas, however, he found little time for “unbending the bow”; but, as has been indicated previously, his chief relaxation came in the unbending which a merry heart afforded in the fellowship of his family and other close friends.

It was in his earnest, happy Christian life, however, that Bishop Hott, after all, was most distinguished. His whole career was dominated by religion. He was a devout and regular reader of the Bible in the early morning. He never entered upon the duties of the day without prayer. Even in his travels he never went to sleep on the train without prayer, his petitions including the engineer.

There was, too, marvelous uniformity in his religious zeal and spirit. He had not two lives, one religious and the other secular. There were no mountain-top and valley experiences alternating with the seasons, or resultant from his own feelings, physical or mental, or from his surroundings, in his life, as is often the case, even with many devout people. His whole life was one of uniform and irrevocable devotion to his divine Master. Even his mirthfulness and humor that so enriched and brightened his life, his playful moods, and the bits of fun that ever and anon spiced his conversation and his writings, were never a reflection on his religious character or his consecration to God. In his humorous moments he was reverent,

and in his most serious moods and efforts he was often humorous. In all this there was a spontaneity and naturalness that strongly appealed to the hearts of those who saw and heard him.

As indicating Bishop Hott's devout spirit and lifelong religious habits in daily living, a few extracts from his diary are worth quoting. On New Year's day, 1876, he wrote: "God is on his throne and Jesus is my Redeemer. Because Christ lives I am willing to begin this year. How poor, how weak! but Jesus is strong and I am his. This morning I look up to Christ as I never did before. O Jesus, thou hast saved me; keep thine arms around me! I must seek to become wiser and better each day, and must do some good every day. Amen."

Two days after the funeral of Bishop Edwards this was his entry: "I cannot escape the gloom which comes upon me at the remembrance of the loss of our dear Brother Edwards." Then, quoting from the bishop's last words, "I would like to live to preach salvation through Christ alone, if it is the will of the Lord," he adds this prayer, "Oh, may the Lord bring me near to Christ my Savior. Jesus, *make me all thine own. Oh, do!*"

These are characteristic records from his diary, and are indicative not only of a spiritual mind, but of the prayer habit of his life. In one case the entry seems to have been in the morning, and is as follows: "I begin this day with a new spirit of consecration and prayer. O God, bless me." He began and closed the day in a devotional attitude. This was the rule of his life from his boyhood. To this must be attributed his luminous and hopeful Christian experience. He was in daily touch with the divine One, and his supplies for the freshening and fructifying of his heart and life were drawn from the living fountains.

It was Bishop Hott's prayer life, his close fellowship

with God, that put into all his religious exercises so much freshness and fragrance. His religion was of the optimistic type, because born of a large and unwavering faith. This was manifest in his public prayers, his preaching, and daily living.

He loved the house of God, and was a constant and sincere worshiper in it. When not preaching he gladly took the place of a humble disciple of his Master, participating in the worship with enthusiastic delight. He joined heartily in the singing, he listened eagerly to the preaching, and his whole soul responded to the breathings of prayer, and to the messages of truth. On going into the house of the Lord it was his custom to assume a reverent attitude, to bow his head and offer a silent prayer for the divine blessing. This was his rule whether at home or among strangers, and it no doubt had much to do in stimulating a keen spiritual appetite, and in promoting growth in the graces of the Spirit, and in power in Christian service. Of this we are sure, he had a very high appreciation of the privileges and value of the Sabbath day. In the last weeks of his life, when confined to his home, he would express on the Sabbath a great and fervent desire to be once again in the house of God. And the testimony of the family is: "How beautifully he would talk to us all on those Sabbaths. He would dwell on the past, and the sweet and perfect home life of the years ago would sing itself into language that brought tears to our eyes and added a hundredfold to the sacredness of God's holy day."

The bishop was ever loyal to his Church. He knew and loved the Church of his parents and of his early choice. Though ever loyally devoted to the interests and work of his own denomination, he was not sectarian or narrow in his feelings or affiliations. He was a man of generous impulses and broad sympathies. He was himself a liberal giver to Christian causes, for one

of his ability. He practiced economy in his own personal expenses that he might be able to give. His generosity far exceeded the tenth in his gifts. He gave freely as he was prospered, and he gave to all the interests of the Church, but he seemed most interested in the colleges, Union Biblical Seminary, and missions. He gave many hundreds of dollars to these great interests. The young men in the ministry of the Church can never know how he loved them and what large plans and hopes he had for them. His enthusiasm and regard for them, and his desire for their best possible furnishing, in mind and heart, for their work, literally knew no bounds. These are among the practical fruits of his full consecration of himself, his gifts, and his possessions to the use of his divine Master, in promoting his kingdom here in the earth.

Bishop Hott was alike practical and helpful in his local church relations and work. For eight years I was a member of the same church to which he belonged. We were both teachers in the Sunday school. I can testify to his great helpfulness in carrying local responsibilities in church work, of his deep interest in his class and their spiritual good, of his real instinct for souls, of his wise counsel to inquirers in times of revival, of his ready and loyal support of his pastor in his plans and methods, and in preaching for him frequently, of the joyousness with which he participated in the services of the holy communion, and of the liberal financial support which he gave to all the interests of both the local and general Church. There are very hallowed memories which gather about those years of fellowship and service in the Master's cause.

Bishop Hott's regard for order, accuracy, neatness, thoroughness was apparent in all the details and habits of his daily life. He possessed the genius of painstaking industry. He had a splendid vocabulary of good English which he had at ready command. He did



not often repeat himself. Even on like occasions, or when speaking or writing on the same theme, he had marvelous facility in injecting new elements, which contributed immeasurably to timeliness and power. All these qualities were markedly prominent in his life, and had an important bearing on every phase of his useful career. Those who knew him well can best appreciate this statement, and yet even they may not have been conscious of the real secret of his power—his strong heart life and his intellectual sincerity and integrity. It was his inner life, so deep and vigorous, which so distinctly influenced and controlled his outer life.

In thus attempting to present a true life-sketch of the career of the noble-souled, tireless, and consecrated Bishop Hott, the aim has been to make the story of his prodigious activities and achievements a practical lesson, especially to the young. Here is the outline of the lesson: To be well born is to be well taught; the training of a child begins with the training of the parents; the place and importance of the home in laying permanent foundations for character and usefulness; the reality and value of early piety; the possibilities of industrious and studious habits; what a conscientious regard for duty, prayer, and unwavering confidence in God's word will do; the essential importance of unreserved devotion to our work; the power and worth of the individual; how one man may be used to do a great work. Where could worthier lessons be found?

Such a life is a rich legacy to friends, the Church, and the world. It is an assuring beacon light to all whose lot is cast in poverty and necessitated struggle. Indeed, it is more; it is an urgent and abiding summons to us all to unquestioning faithfulness in the use of God-given talents; for it is faithfulness in the use of entrusted gifts, rather than the mere possession of



them, that makes any life great or deserving of honor. Fidelity is the one supreme law and test of character and permanent usefulness.

Few men have exceeded Bishop Hott in the quality of his work, and in the wide extent of his influence, and all because he performed faithfully the work committed to him by the Lord. His life, therefore, should be an inspiration to preachers and others, old and young. It happily exemplifies the results of a life of righteousness. It portrays the beauty and rewards of a life spent in the service of his fellow-men.

It is not to be inferred from what is here said, however, that this man was without weaknesses and faults. He was sometimes impulsive in speech and action; he was not above the liability to error in judgment. No, he was human; he was not perfect; he was not faultless. No one was more deeply conscious of his failings than he was himself; yet he was a man of God. He believed himself to be called of God and sent of God to do the work of God, and to this end he gave the undivided and unwearied devotion of his entire being. This is godliness. With all his limitations, his controlling ambition was to be a true servant of Jesus Christ. To him holiness was not so much an attainment as it was a right attitude toward God, in trust, obedience, and love. It was this that made him like David and others, true to God, "a man after God's own heart." In his heart-attitude and relations he was loyal to God and men. This was the secret of the power he wielded. He was indeed a good man and useful in his day and generation. He has finished his earthly career. His tired, worn-out body rests, but his influence goes on. He lived well in his age, and he will live in future ages. His work is imperishable. His memory shall not fade. He shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

To know James W. Hott in his earthly relations and ministries was to respect, esteem, and love him. May

those who learn to know him through this affectionate memorial learn likewise to appreciate his priceless influence and to emulate his virtues, and to love and serve his God. In this way his memory, now so fresh and fragrant in affection and good deeds, shall have immortality.

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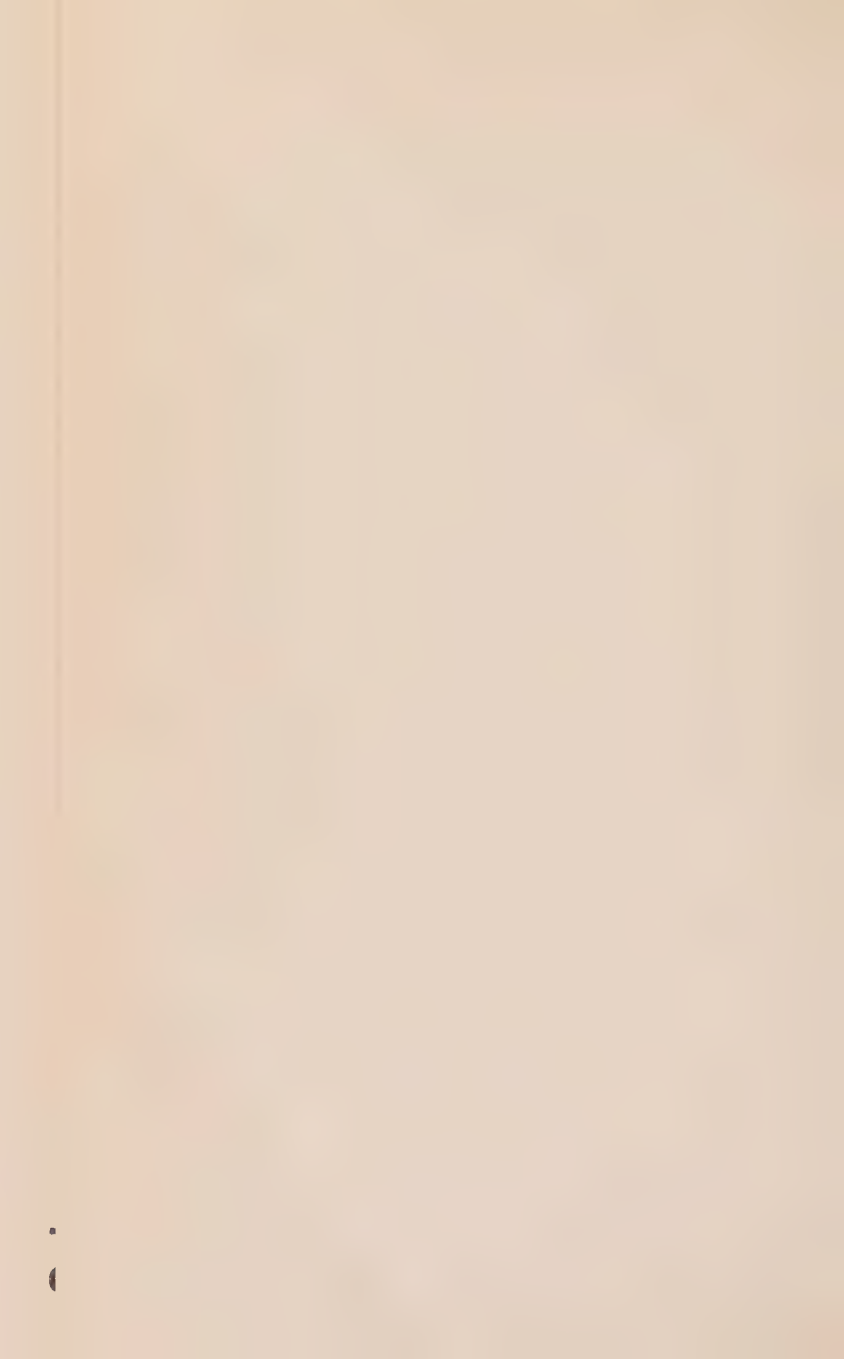
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